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THE SIEGE OF TOBRUK

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IT MUST have been after the first week in May 1941 that the German High Command began to realize that things were not going too well in Northern Africa. Until then everything had gone beautifully: they had got through to the Egyptian frontier in the time it took to get there and had many thousands of British and Australian troops bottled up behind the flimsy defenses of Tobruk. They had smashed a British Armored Brigade and had nearly cut off the best part of an Australian division in Cyrenaica. The victors in Poland and France, were available — until then no army in this war had stood up to a full panzer attack. Over in Greece the Allied Armies had been smashed and overrun in record time. Yes, things were moving; smash this absurd resistance in Tobruk and then on to the Suez Canal.

But the first few days' fighting in May must have been a jolt that made every intelligent thinker in the German *Afrika Korps* pause and take stock.

To get the picture, go back to the fall of Benghazi early in February. That very day the decision was made to send armed support to Greece. Here was an Australian division freshly blooded and

in the peak of its form. It was a logical first choice for the job in Greece. With it was a great British Armored Division which had broken all records in the ground it had covered without maintenance. Refit it must. This meant withdrawal to Cairo.

But Cyrenaica must be garrisoned. All right. In Palestine there were thousands of new Australian troops, great material but as yet only a quarter trained and little better equipped. What could be better than to put them up in this pleasant green land as a garrison and there complete their training. From Cairo a new Armored Brigade was sent forward to replace their veteran comrades, many of whom had been out in the desert as far back as 1936. It was all so simple.

For two months the roads for hundreds of miles were choked with troops moving both east and west. This is desert country again, and the road to Tripoli runs through miles of lonely salt pans. Very soon reports began to trickle back of brief encounters with fast-moving armored cars. 'They're different from anything we've seen and look like Germans' was the usual story.

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The Australian Brigadier commanding has since told me that he was frankly worried at the frequent clashes on the frontier of Tripolitania. He reported his fears and then had to give all his men back to Egypt. Greece and Crete lay before them, from which barely one third returned.

So the early months of the year passed with the roads gradually clearing as the huge change-over sorted itself out. Away down in Southern Cyrenaica near Agheila, ill-equipped Australian troops awaited events with only a thin armored screen in front of them. Daily it was becoming more obvious that the enemy was massing in strength, and these troops on the frontier waited and watched that lonely road wondering when the German would come. It was obvious that a huge German force was assembling along the Gulf of Sirte.

I traveled with the British artillery back to Mersa Matruh and there met the rear parties of our troops moving to Alexandria and thence on to Greece. They all had the same tale: 'There's hell brewing down on the frontier. I hope our new chaps will be O.K.' As ever, the private soldier knew what was doing.

I was back in Alexandria by the end of March waiting my turn to move to Greece. Late on the night of April 3 a special communiqué appeared on Reuter's ticker: 'Benghazi has been reoccupied by German troops.' It was the biggest shock of the war; already things were bad enough in the Balkans, but since December they had been so rosy in the Middle East.

There was only one thing for me to do: forget Greece and get back up the desert. All our transport had gone on; I would have to hitchhike. I got to Mersa late one afternoon. That night a launch put in — the Naval Officer in Charge at Derna. 'Yes, they reached Derna the night before last. We blew the mole and the Aussies have blown the passes. When I left, the Arabs were rioting and the town was in flames. There were an

Aussie officer and a couple of men waiting for stragglers before they blew the last bridge. Aussies have been pouring through for days. They looked done in, but they're bloody angry.'

A blinding sandstorm almost hid the dawn. With a plane ride to Tobruk promised, I raced to the drome. Hopeless; all planes grounded. Through the clouds of sand a Bombay touched down and a car raced towards the town. 'General Wavell — he has just paid a lightning trip to Tobruk and we are going to hold the perimeter,' the word passed round. Back he came as the storm lifted. 'Any chance of an interview?' I asked a member of his staff. The words sounded ridiculous as I spoke them. 'Sorry, the General must get on. What's the news from Greece?' I watched an outwardly calm figure wait for the plane to taxi up and then clamber in. Away the plane roared through the thinning dust clouds. Greece tomorrow, I thought; it seemed a lot for any man.

'No planes will go forward today' was the next blow. Out on the road again with my thumb up. Luck this time — a car with the back seat empty. Sollum at dusk after a nightmare trip over Graziani's unfinished road with RAF transport moving against us all day. More uncertainty here. 'Yes, we're holding Tobruk, but it's only a matter of time before they encircle the perimeter and come on here. We're on an hour's notice. Go on at your own risk.' Up the escarpment in the dusk, past engineers working on the demolition charges. The plain below was angry with the smoke and red glare of burning petrol dumps. On through the lines of Bardia. It seemed very lonely that night.

The full moon was high as we drove down the broken road to the Tobruk perimeter. Our headlights were on and a few hundred yards out a patrol signaled us to a halt. Here we got the first scraps of news. 'Yes, we've filled the perimeter posts. Most of the boys got back O.K. They've had a hell of a time. Beyond a

few armored cars, Jerry hasn't shown up round here yet. We got one car today.' Down the slope we drove, crossing the as yet unblown bridge spanning the tank ditch. Another check post, grinning faces in the moonlight — the first signs of confidence we had seen for days.

II

Next morning we heard for the first time the story of the past ten days. When the new Australian division moved into Cyrenaica one brigade was left in Tobruk and the remaining two pushed on to Benghazi. Late one afternoon came the order to withdraw, the Germans were coming.

Past Benina airport the slow convoys toiled, Australian airmen watching in silence. The Germans had advanced swiftly, and with far superior equipment had smashed the British Armored Brigade. The flames rose higher in Benghazi, and retiring sappers told of the German entry, verification coming from the scattered remnants of the Brigade. What was worse, the enemy had not confined himself to the coastal plane but had outflanked us and was making for Mechili across the desert. The greater part of the new Australian division was in danger of being cut off. A quick decision: all must get back to Tobruk and risk the exposed left flank.

The withdrawal went on by night and by day, a terrible journey for all involved. Of this period one officer has written: 'The darkness was the blackness of a dream. Fifty miles of road were choked with vehicles and men. There was no dispersion; nothing mattered except to get back at all costs.'

'The men were stunned and ashamed; disappointment and shame made them quiet as they climbed into their trucks,' an officer told me. One hundred and eighty miles lay before them and already German patrols were cutting the roads. Some German motorized patrols got right among our troops. That was how

Generals O'Connor and Neame were captured while hundreds of their troops were still to the west.

South at Mechili an Indian motorized brigade met the main German encircling force and managed to stave them off for a few vital hours. Finally surrounded, their survivors broke clear in trucks and managed to get back to Tobruk to do yeoman service. At Gazala the main body of the Australians were sorted out and fell back on Tobruk while one battalion took up an outer line at Acroma to cover the final withdrawal. Here they stayed for three days, continually bombed and machine-gunned. But no attack came; for the moment, the Germans had outrun their strength. On the night of the third day the Australians came into Tobruk, and all the next morning the exhausted men slept protected by a severe sandstorm. Later in the day they took up their positions on the perimeter, and on the night of April 9 the defenses were fully manned.

III

With the town and harbor as its centre, a semicircle barely eight miles out at its greatest depth and stretching inland from coast to coast again marks the perimeter at Tobruk. It is heavily wired and is protected by an anti-tank ditch and deep wadis for all but the central section. Here the ditch peters out for several of the twenty-eight miles of its total front. The coast is scarred about every half mile with deep wadis which run inland for about a mile. Behind the wire is the line of the 'posts,' which number over 140 and are from 300 to 700 yards apart. Nothing is to be seen of them above the ground level, but below, in the majority, is a series of heavily concreted rooms and corridors, the whole being encircled by a deep outer concrete passage which is roofed in parts, forming the outer extremities of inner rooms. They were piled with sand and full of vermin and filth.

Tobruk Harbor is formed by a neck of land running out, making a small bay which gives the only protection along this coast to the prevailing northerlies. The town — or what is left of it — is concrete-built and fairly large in size. Deep tunnels and well-concreted rooms run into the bluff from the water's edge. These were used as hospitals, oil storage, pumping plants, and workshops by the Italians. Huge areas are given over to military stores, water condensation plants, powerhouses, and workshops. Wireless masts lean at an ugly angle, a sharp reminder of a more orderly past. It is a pure garrison town on a fairly good harbor; it was never built and had no reason to exist as anything else.

The area inside the perimeter totals some 180 square miles. Forts and buildings are thinly scattered throughout. The coastal wadis are thickly lined with hundreds of rusting trucks and other vehicles, most of them fired and destroyed by the Italians in the last hours before we took the town in January. Except in a few wadis, there is no vegetation; the whole area is a brown, rocky, wind-swept waste. Where traffic has cut up the surface the dust flies on the slightest puff of wind; barely a day is free of these storms. Inside the perimeter are two inferior dromes flanked by bullet-torn galvanized iron sheds.

All troops were in their posts by Wednesday, April 9. On Good Friday the enemy encircled the perimeter and sent advance units on to Sollum. He has never got more than a few miles farther. The mercurial spirits of our men in these first few days were amazing, considering the ordeal they had undergone. The fact that they were besieged did not worry them. 'Where are you going for Easter?' was the prevailing crack. Already contact had been made with German armored cars on the wire, but the main body of troops was only just coming up.

They came down the Derna road packed vehicle to vehicle. The British

artillery waited for the target and then let them have it. Observers have told me that the slaughter was terrible in the brief few minutes before the survivors broke clear and left over thirty vehicles smashed and burning. This was the first of many successes won by the British gunners. Their contribution to the defense of Tobruk has been paramount; on many occasions their great work has turned the battle in our favor.

It was Good Friday that the German infantry appeared in strength. The artillery searched them out as they left their transport and moved in toward our wire. Very few of them actually got there. But Easter Sunday night the enemy got his tanks inside, thirty-nine all told. At dawn they moved, making straight for the El Adem corner to cut our defenses in half as we had done in January. Infantry flowed in behind them. The whole area crashed with shell fire that day as the German tanks raced from point to point trying to find a loop-hole. Our own tanks joined battle and our guns, large and small, claimed many victims. Out in the front-line posts our infantry kept their heads and let the tanks go on. But they were there for the following infantry and inflicted terrible slaughter as the Germans tried to consolidate their tank infiltration.

'I always told my men the Germans were no good,' an exhausted lieutenant little more than a boy told me that night. 'About three hundred of them came up to the wire about dusk. We kept them down with our fire and then another wave came. We seemed to hold them for about two hours until moonrise. I was finishing a patrol along the wire when my corporal rushed up and said some had got in behind us. I sent a runner to company headquarters and then decided to attack, myself. I took six men round the flank at the double and told them to make a hell of a noise. With my platoon giving covering fire we tore into them. There were about forty of them, and to my surprise not

one of them stood to their machine guns. Most of them scattered, but those who remained groveled on the ground. My men were shouting and giving it to them with grenades and bayonets. Our fierce rush took us right through and we killed about twelve of them. My corporal saved my life. I had broken my bayonet and was swinging my rifle when one German grappled with me. Another was rushing at me, but my corporal fixed them both.' The corporal was mortally wounded when he came to his officer's aid, and died early the next morning. He received a posthumous V.C., Australia's first in this war.

Another officer told me how German tanks attacked his men as they lay in a sangar, a narrow circle of stone and earth banked up to give shelter. 'One tank singled us out and crashed into the low wall round us. He would reverse and smack in again and again, but luckily the wall held. He was firing his machine guns at us, but luckily could not deflect them low enough. Finally he was driven away by our tanks. Lucky.'

By now Australian patrols were making themselves felt outside the wire, especially against the Italians, who had come up in large numbers. And already the lack of cohesion between the Italians and their German masters was becoming obvious. On April 15 an Italian attack was launched on our positions north of the Derna road. They were to be supported by German tanks, but these were pinned down by our artillery fire, leaving the Italians in the air. An Australian officer and twenty men went out in three Bren carriers and rounded up 847 Italian prisoners who did not offer the slightest resistance. The German tanks fired on them in disgust as they milled towards our wire with their hands up. 'They are in a bad way and come up to our wire weeping' ran the report. Night after night our patrols were out. From the very beginning the Australians had undisputed control of No Man's Land after dark.

IV

The next and main German attack was made at a point several miles west of the enemy's original entry place. It came from the Meduuar sector, where rising ground he held beyond our wire gave him a commanding view and field of fire over our ground running out to the front-line posts in that area. The troops employed were all veterans of the Polish and French campaigns; they had never suffered a reversal. A large majority of them were specially flown from Sicily to get there in time for the attack. One such unit was a special creation of the German panzer division. Though described as engineers, they were in reality a specially trained and highly specialized infantry group somewhat similar to a modern British Pioneer Battalion. Their rôle was to blast their way through strongly defended enemy positions, prepare tank crossings, and establish themselves as a bridgehead for the subsequent tank and infantry entry. They were armed exclusively with automatic weapons, light and heavy, as well as mortars and an ample supply of grenades. In short, they were the highest development of a blitz army.

The German reversal suffered in the fighting in the early days of May may safely be described as one of the most important victories of the war. Had the attack succeeded, Tobruk must have fallen even if the garrison had fought, as they had orders to do, to the last man. Apart from the terrific blow to morale in England, and more so in Australia, the whole German *Afrika Korps* with its ragtag of Italian support would have been released for an attack on Egypt a fortnight before the battle for Crete and while what was left of the cream of the Army of the Nile was still precariously coming in from Greece, with all equipment that counted, as well as transport, lost. True, we had commenced to build our new army in the Western Desert but it is highly improbable that it could

have resisted a full German attack in early May, reinforced as it would have been by immense hauls in guns, transport, and petrol captured in Tobruk. In addition the full German air force in Africa would have been released for the attack, and at this time it was at its highest peak of strength and efficiency. It had yet to blunt its teeth on Tobruk. As our men sweated and slaved to strengthen their posts in the Acroma road area in the last few days of April it would have come as a surprise to them to learn that they held the key to Egypt. Not that such knowledge would have aroused them to greater effort. They were raw troops; this was the test of their Australian manhood. They lay in the stifling posts under the relentless sun, choking in the dust storms that never seemed to settle. Already water was rationed to half a gallon a man a day, and its brackish flavor permeated the strongest tea they could brew.

Towards dusk on the night of April 30 the posts in this area were subjected to heavy fire from artillery and trench mortars. Our artillery replied, and for the next few hours a fierce artillery duel went on. At nine that night, enemy infantry were reported to be through our wire. Our front posts in this area were some considerable distance apart although there were small listening parties put out between at night. There was uncertainty until dawn, and no doubt these picked German troops were doing their job, digging in and consolidating. There were several hand-to-hand encounters with our patrols, who were forced to withdraw owing to heavy machine-gun fire. What scanty reports did get back to headquarters before dawn showed that the position was likely to be serious.

That night one wounded man tried to give me a picture of what went on. 'About midnight I was out in a listening post with a cobber. We were about one hundred yards from our main post. About fifty Jerries crept up on our flank and the two of us opened fire hoping to

warn the boys back in the main post. Then all hell was let loose. All the enemy seemed armed with tommy guns and they swept on past our shallow post, one of them sweeping it with a full burst and wounding me across the back of the legs. My cobber dropped him. Some of the Germans must have got through, past the post, but a few came dodging back, a couple of them taking shelter beside me. I lay doggo and pretended to be dead. What worried me most at the time was the way they stank. I must have passed out after that, but at dawn my cobber came out and brought me in. I was back with the ambulance before seven. Things looked pretty bad as I left, as they had tanks coming in.'

And bad things were. At dawn large parties of the enemy were dug in some hundreds of yards inside our wire, firing on the forward posts from the rear. Out in front nearly a hundred tanks and armored cars were charging towards the wire. The leading tanks had thick lengths of steel cable stretched between them and crashed through dragging thirty or forty yards of the wire defenses with them. Through the gaps so made poured the others, to be followed by truckloads of infantry. They were hotly engaged by our forward anti-tank guns, but these were overwhelmed in a matter of minutes, and with the morning light came a heavy dust storm, blocking any vision our artillery might have had from farther back. They had been firing like men possessed and already had taken a severe toll. The fire never slackened, but isolated targets were gone for the next few vital hours. All they could do was to put a curtain beyond our wire to destroy any oncoming enemy following the initial tanks and infantry.

The German tanks fought to a cunningly thought-out plan. As soon as they penetrated the wire and the token ditch only a foot or so deep, the main body raced on, but three or four made for each post in the area. These they completely surrounded and, halting on

each corner, killed any man who dared show his head. Through the loopholes built for machine-gun fire they poured shells from their main guns; and once they had driven the garrisons to earth, they opened the tank doors long enough to hurl stick bombs down the traverses. In this way several posts were overcome and the occupants either killed, wounded, or made prisoner.

All this day the enemy air force was active. Dive-bombing and machine-gun attacks were made repeatedly along our posts. On this occasion flame throwers were used for the first time at Tobruk. Observers from the posts we still held saw German tanks standing off and throwing jets of flame about thirty feet long and nine feet thick into our positions. However, they proved a dangerous weapon to the men using them. Several times the containers caught alight and the subsequent explosion destroyed everything in the immediate vicinity.

As the morning wore on, German tanks established a salient four miles inside our line on a 3000-yard front, a bridgehead that constituted a real danger. All day the tank battles went on and the enemy infantry consolidated their gains. Along the perimeter several local counterattacks were made. The confusion was indescribable as communications between the posts and their company and battalion headquarters had long since been severed. Luckily some of the vital posts on the flanks of the captured territory remained in our hands throughout, the garrisons inflicting terrible slaughter on the enemy infantry as they infiltrated through in the dust storm.

Before the dust came down and ruined visibility on the morning of May 2, the big tract of country occupied by the enemy inside our wire presented a desolate scene. Derelict tanks and trucks littered the area, but a rapid count showed over a hundred such vehicles forming up again. Down came our artillery on them, and black smoke rose above the

dust from thirty different spots. Similar formations outside got their share of it time and time again, forcing them to disperse. Counterattacks were launched on May 2 and 3, but the enemy repulsed all efforts to dislodge him from the salient. He used his knocked-out tanks as pillboxes, and his terrific strength in machine guns negated the head-on attempts of our infantry to dislodge him, despite the artillery support our gunners were able to give.

The prodigality of our artillery fire must have amazed the enemy. With the exception of one Australian regiment which was barely in action at this period, the artillery defenses were manned by British gunners, many of them belonging to some of the oldest and proudest regiments in the British Army. They carried out their work under constant bombing and machine-gun attacks and may safely claim to have played more than a major part in saving Tobruk in the vital hours. The Australians who fought the infantry battles will always give them full credit. Nor must the work of a North of England machine-gun regiment be forgotten. This regiment had fought with the victorious army that had destroyed the Italian Army of Cyrenaica barely five months before, and had remained on to give service second to none.

For the next fortnight fierce local fighting went on round the salient. Finally, on the night of May 15-16, we counterattacked and drove the enemy back 1000 yards. After that he never disputed our control of No Man's Land. His main attack on Tobruk had failed. It lay as a thorn in his line of communications to the frontier and he had to settle down to a siege with all its attendant difficulties instead of making a swift drive into Egypt to coincide with the Battle of Crete.

V

The ferocity of the German air attacks on Tobruk are ample proof of their desperate anxiety to subdue the garrison.

The pace the enemy set in the early days could not be kept up by men or machines, and in later months the attacks eased off, but never enough to make the garrison area free from subconscious worry about the skies above. No other area of this size in the world has been so thoroughly blitzed: by the end of October nearly 1200 separate raids had taken place. The harbor was the favorite target in the early days, with the front-line posts and ammunition dumps a close second. All day and night the anti-aircraft guns boomed; in those first few weeks it seemed as if there would never be a moment's peace and quiet. While they were able to maintain planes on the primitive drome inside the perimeter the RAF did an outstanding job. Hopelessly outnumbered, the RAF pilots fought literally from sunrise to sunset, touching down only for fuel and ammunition. But as fast as they shot down German planes fresh ones appeared. They were always lurking in the clouds to trap the unwary, and finally the gallant fight against such odds had to end.

After that the Germans had the air to themselves, but they always have had the magnificent anti-aircraft defenses to contend with. As from fifty to eighty planes appeared over the harbor and one after another peeled off into their screaming dives, it was always a safe bet that one or more would never straighten out. The British heavy gunners stuck to their work with a courage that was almost superhuman. In later months dive-bombing attacks slackened considerably, the enemy going in more and more for high-level attacks. These were just as nerve-racking, as no one could ever guess the target.

No part of the area was free from attack; water points, food and ammunition supply dumps, petrol stores, and harbor installations all received their share. 'They took us out for a rest in what we thought would be a peaceful wadi, but we got such hell from the air that we were glad to get back into the

perimeter posts,' one private told me with a grin. Even the beaches were not free. To the Australian in particular, swimming was the only relaxation; to be attacked while naked and in the water was the last straw. On several occasions I have seen hundreds of yards of beach tossed by the racing feet of bronzed and naked men while their comrades worked at the Brens carefully set up to meet such an eventuality. All day and far on into the night the beaches were packed, and it is a miracle that so little damage was done there during the really hot months.

From the beginning the harbor was the main target for the enemy bombers. At first, merchant shipping came in by daylight, but the constant bombing proved too dangerous and the losses too severe. Thereafter all supplies were brought in and sick and wounded evacuated at night. This service has gone on ever since and is perhaps one of the greatest jobs the Navy has done in this war. The enemy have never let up bombing the sea routes, but the Navy has always got through. One Australian destroyer¹ old enough to have seen service in the latter part of the last war holds the record with a total of twenty-eight trips to Tobruk. I traveled back to Tobruk on her in August and we were relentlessly attacked from the air towards sunset. There were several near misses before our fighters appeared on the scene and drove the Junkers 87's and the Messerschmitts away in a dogged battle. A big dogfight went on over our heads, and planes seemed to be everywhere. While the battle was raging more enemy bombers came in, but skillful handling of the destroyer enabled us to dodge their bombs. On that occasion the enemy lost nine planes and the RAF five. The sailors took it as normal part of the routine job. 'We are getting used to it in Bomb Alley,' one of them told me.

¹ This was probably the H.M.A.S. *Waterhen*, later sunk under tow without loss of life.

In the back areas the huge and complex organization necessary to maintain the modern army was running at full swing. Workshops were always working at full pressure; refitting tanks, guns, vehicles, water carriers, right through down to small armory jobs, these men wrought miracles of improvisation. Ammunition companies were never idle; to allow any gun position to be short even for a few hours would have been the cardinal sin. In addition there were the ackack posts to be serviced — those hungry guns that must often have gone for days at a time without cooling off. No wonder that the roads and tracks in Tobruk were never idle. Now and then during a severe raid all traffic would come to a stop, but as the last planes zoomed away the whole area would spring to life again and engines would roar as the drivers raced to overtake the lost minutes.

The medical services did outstanding work. As soon as a wounded man was fit to travel he was taken to a clearing station near the harbor. Here he would wait the ghostlike arrival of the destroyers. Stretcher cases were loaded on barges and ferried out. Gently they were embarked and, all going well, were many miles away by dawn. But time and time again the planes would come over while the wounded were in the open. Wherever possible these helpless men would be rushed to cover, but more often they would be caught in the open. The devoted bearers would never leave them; all they could do was to cower down beside their stricken comrades and alternate prayer with curses.

With the record of the terrible toll dysentery took on Gallipoli ever in their minds, the older officers strove from the beginning to impress the necessary precautions on the minds of all. They did their job well; dysentery has never been a major problem. Sandfly fever, a swift malaria-like illness, caused a lot of trouble during the summer months. Diet deficiency was perhaps the main

medical worry. Vitamins in tablets can never properly replace the missing food-stuffs. The men lived out of tins although, as time went on, frozen meat was available in small quantities. Outwardly fit, they weakened imperceptibly; all right for the immediate job, how much sudden and concentrated effort they could stand up to became a worrying thought. Desert sores spread; the slightest scratch and a fester followed. With the Australian's self-assumed air of callousness, the mental breakdowns were dismissed as the 'bomb happies' with more sympathy than resentment.

Every night patrols would be out, some penetrating as far as three and four miles into enemy territory. Tank hunting and destruction, location of enemy mine fields, destruction of forward observation posts, and straight-out fighting — these and other activities of the men made life a misery to the enemy. By mid-July in the vital salient sector, we had reduced the German front by several thousands of yards and its depth by over a thousand.

But the Germans still held the vital posts on the Meduuar rise. Early in August we came nearest to success, but the fates were against us. A small attacking force succeeded in reaching its objective and dislodging the enemy. One officer carried a Very pistol and cartridges in a bag on his back. With the pistol he was to give the 'success' signal. In the post he reached for the bag; it had been torn off farther back by the barbed wire. Back in our lines no one knew what was going on, and it was not until night that a runner got through with the news that we had held the objective all day with a handful mostly of wounded men. It was too late; the gallant little force was overwhelmed.

It was after this fight that one of those queer truces unarranged by higher commands occurred. All night the bearers, both German and Australian, had searched for their wounded. Dawn found them with their task far from finished.

They worked on amid desultory fire that died away. For some hours all was silence while the hunt went on. Stern faced men would signal 'Here is one of yours,' and ultimately every wounded man was cleared away. Gradually the firing began again and the truce was over.

So the months went by. For two thirds of a year we held the German at bay. Tobruk was like a running wound in his side that paralyzed any movement on to Egypt. The battered town, the ugly wind-swept slopes and rugged wadis all pockmarked and torn, with the gray stains of tens of thousands of explosions,

the lonely cemetery up there on the eastern rises, the harbor waters with the rusting spars and hulls of many ships, the masts and cranes along the front lying awry as the blast from thousands of bombs had left them — it will be many years before this vast ugly area will lapse back into its desert state. Rust and destruction will be the only record of one of the great jobs in this war. 'Disappointment and shame' were the emotions that silenced our men as they fell back from Barce in those anxious April days. They were not to know then that within a month they were to save Egypt and perhaps the world.

THE FOX

BY EDWARD WEISMILLER

No man's marauder, and no creature's bane,
 silent, yet still profane,
 he trots the forest effortful and cold
 through the soft, difficult snow,
 controlled by the slow world where he must go.

Branches are broad with snow; each has a fine
 and spidery underline.
 The snow resumes. Trees fade to sky and ground,
 and west, east, north and south
 confound the fox's eye, his ravenous mouth.

Nothing else stirs in all this silent stirring.
 No bird, confused and whirring,
 beats like a moth through the white hemlock lanes;
 even the hare, dismayed,
 trains his wild heart, and holds his barricade.

Helpless, the fox goes on. The snow's descent
 requires him innocent:
 he comprehends the serpent and the dove.
 It is as though Cain had been such another,
 loving, or lost — calling: Abel; my brother.

HERE IS HOME

BY MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS

I

CROSS CREEK is a bend in a country road, by land, and the flowing of Lochloosa Lake into Orange Lake, by water. We are four miles west of the small village of Island Grove, nine miles east of a turpentine still, and on the other sides we do not count distance at all, for the two lakes and the broad marshes create an infinite space between us and the horizon. We are five white families: 'Old Boss' Brice, the Glissons, the Mackays, and the Bernie Basses; and two colored families, Henry Woodward and the Mickenses. People in Island Grove consider us just a little bigotty and more than a little queer. Black Kate and I between us once misplaced some household object, quite unreasonably.

I said, 'Kate, am I crazy, or are you?'

She gave me her quick sideways glance that was never entirely impudent: —

'Likely all two of us. Don't you reckon it take somebody a little bit crazy to live out here at the Creek?'

At one time or another most of us at the Creek have been suspected of a degree of madness. Madness is only a variety of mental nonconformity, and we are all individualists here.

The Creek folk of color are less suspect than the rest of us. Yet there is something a little different about them from blacks who live gregariously in Quarters, so that even if they did not live at the Creek, they would stay, I think, somehow aloof from the layer-

cake life of the average Negro. Tom Glisson and Old Boss and I think anybody is crazy not to live here, but I know what Kate meant. We have chosen a deliberate isolation, and are enamored of it.

Something about Cross Creek suits us — or something about us makes us cling to it contentedly, lovingly, and often in exasperation, through the vicissitudes that have driven others away.

'I wouldn't live any place else,' Tom said, 'if I had gold buried in Georgia. I tell you, so much happens at Cross Creek.'

We at the Creek need and have found only very simple things. We must need flowering and fruiting trees, for all of us have citrus groves of one size or another. We must need a certain blandness of season, with a longer and more beneficent heat than many require, for there is never too much sun for us, and through the long summers we do not complain. We need the song of birds, and there is none finer than the redbird. We need the sound of rain coming across the *hamaca*, and the sound of wind in trees — and there is no more sensitive Aeolian harp than the palm. The pine is good, for the needles brushing one another have a great softness, and we have the wind in the pines, too.

We need above all, I think, a certain remoteness from urban confusion; and while this can be found in other places, Cross Creek offers it with such beauty and grace that, once entangled with it, no

other place seems possible to us, just as when truly in love none other offers the comfort of the beloved. We are not even offended when others do not share our delight. Tom Glisson and I often laugh together at the people who consider the Creek dull or, in the precise sense, outlandish.

'There was a fellow woke me up,' he said, 'was lost. I'd heard his car go by and hit the Creek bridge like cattle stomped. I wondered if any one in that big of a hurry knowed where he was going. Directly he come back and stopped and I heard him holler from the gate. I pulled on my breeches and went out to him. I said, "Reckon you're lost." "Lost ain't the word for it," he said. "Is this the end of the world? Where in God's name am I?" I said, "Mister, you're at Cross Creek." "That don't tell me a thing," he said. "I still ain't anywhere."'

'People in town sometimes say to me when I start home at night,' I said, "'We hate to see you drive off alone to that awful place.'"

'Well,' he said comfortably, 'they just don't know the Creek.'

We do. We know one another. Our knowledge is a strange kind, totally without intimacy, for we go our separate ways and meet only when new fences are strung, or someone's stock intrudes on another, or when one of us is ill or in trouble, or when woods fires come too close, or when a shooting occurs and we must agree who is right and who must go to jail, or when the weather is so preposterous, either as to heat or cold, or rain or drought, that we seek out excuses to be together, to talk together about the common menace. We get into violent arguments and violent quarrels, sometimes about stock, sometimes because we take sides with our favorites when the dark Mickens family goes on the war-path. The village exaggerates our differences and claims that something in the Creek water makes people quarrelsome. Our amenities pass unnoticed.

We do injustices among ourselves, and another of us, not directly involved, usually manages to put in a judicious word on the side of right. The one who is wrong usually ends by admitting it, and all is well again, and I have done my share of the eating of humble pie. And when the great enemies Old Starvation and Old Death come skulking down on us, we put up a united front and fight them side by side, as we fight the woods fires. Each of us knows the foibles of the others and the strength and the weaknesses, and who can be counted on for what. Old Aunt Martha Mickens, with her deceptive humility and her face like poured chocolate, is perhaps the shuttle that has woven our knowledge, carrying back and forth, with the apparent innocence of a nest-building bird, the most revealing bits of gossip; the sort of gossip that tells, not trivial facts, but human motives and the secrets of human hearts. Each of us pretends that she carries these threads only about others and never about us, but we all know better, and that none of us is spared.

A dozen other whites and a baker's dozen of other blacks have lived at one time or another among us, or in the immediate vicinity of the Creek, coming and going like the robins. We are clan-nish and do not feel the same about them as we feel about ourselves. It was believed in the beginning that I was one of these. Surely the Creek would drive me away. When it was clear that a freezing of the orange crop was as great a catastrophe to me as to the others, surely I would not be here long. It was when old Martha, who had set up the Brices as Old Boss and Old Miss, referred to me one day as Young Miss, that it was understood by all of us that I was here to stay.

For myself, the Creek satisfies a thing that had gone hungry and unfed since childhood days. I am often lonely. Who is not? But I should be lonelier in the heart of a city. And as Tom says, 'So much happens here.' I walk at sunset,

east along the road. There are no houses in that direction, except the abandoned one where the wild plums grow, white with bloom in springtime. I usually walk halfway to the village and back again. No one goes, like myself, on foot, except Bernie Bass perhaps, striding firmly in rubber boots with his wet sack of fish over his shoulder. Sometimes black Henry passes with a mule and wagon, taking a load of lightwood home to Old Boss; sometimes a neighbor's car, or the wagon that turns off toward the turpentine woods to collect the resin, or the timber truck coming out from the pine woods. The white folks call 'Hey!' and children wave gustily and with pleasure. A stranger driving by usually slows down and asks whether I want a lift. The Negroes touch a finger to their ragged caps or pretend courteously not to see me. Evening after evening I walk as far as the magnolias near Big Hammock, and home, and see no one.

Folk call the road lonely, because there is not human traffic and human stirring. Because I have walked it so many times and seen such a tumult of life there, it seems to me one of the most populous highways of my acquaintance. I have walked it in ecstasy, and in joy it is beloved. Every pine tree, every gallberry bush, every passion vine, every joree rustling in the underbrush, is vibrant. I have walked it in trouble, and the wind in the trees beside me is easing. I have walked it in despair, and the red of the sunset is my own blood dissolving into the night's darkness. For all such things were on earth before us, and will survive after us, and it is given to us to join ourselves with them and to be comforted.

II

The road goes west out of the village, past open pine woods and gallberry flats. An eagle's nest is a ragged cluster of sticks in a tall tree, and one of the eagles is usually black and silver against the sky. The other perches near the nest,

hunched and proud, like a griffon. There is no magic here except the eagles. Yet the four miles to the Creek are stirring, like the bleak, portentous beginning of a good tale. The road curves sharply, the vegetation thickens and, around the bend, masses into dense hammock. The hammock breaks, is pushed back on either side of the road; and set down in its brooding heart is the orange grove.

Any grove or any wood is a fine thing to see. But the magic here, strangely, is not apparent from the road. It is necessary to leave the impersonal highway, to step inside the rusty gate and close it behind. By this, an act of faith is committed, through which one accepts blindly the communion cup of beauty. One is now inside the grove, out of one world and in the mysterious heart of another. Enchantment lies in different things for each of us. For me, it is in this: to step out of the bright sunlight into the shade of orange trees; to walk under the arched canopy of their jadelike leaves; to see the long aisles of lichen-trunks stretch ahead in a geometric rhythm; to feel the mystery of a seclusion that yet has shafts of light striking through it. This is the essence of an ancient and secret magic. It goes back, perhaps, to the fairy tales of childhood, to Hansel and Gretel, to Babes in the Wood, to Alice in Wonderland, to all half-luminous places that pleased the imagination as a child. It may go back still farther, to racial Druid memories, to an atavistic sense of safety and delight in an open forest. And after long years of spiritual homelessness, of nostalgia, here is that mystic loveliness of childhood again. Here is home. An old thread, long tangled, comes straight again.

I think that the shabbiness of the Creek is a part of its endearing quality. It is comfortable and weather-beaten, meeting Time halfway. I am sometimes tempted to put up a new fence across the house yard. I have always thought that a white picket fence must be a great comfort to a householder. I think of the

pride I should take in seeing white paint gleaming from around the bend in the road. Then Snow, the grove man, becomes quietly tired of waiting for me to do something, and comes driving the farm truck into the yard over the cattle-gap with a load of fresh fatwood pine posts from the hammock.

He asks, 'You aim just to use the old gate, don't you?'

I aim to use the old gate, and say so, and Snow goes ahead and replaces the rotten and sagging posts with new ones. He tightens the fence wire, 'Hog and cattle 4-inch mesh,' and the effect is trim and eminently suitable. I tell myself that a white picket fence would interfere with the feeling one has inside the house of being a part of the grove; that a new fence would mean tearing out the coral honeysuckle vines that cling passionately to the old wire. But the real objection is that an elegant fence would bring to the Creek a wanton orderliness that is out of place.

When I came to the Creek, and knew the old grove and farmhouse at once as home, there was some terror, such as one feels in the first recognition of a human love; for the joining of person to place, as of person to person, is a commitment to shared sorrow, even as to shared joy. The farmhouse was all dinginess. It sat snugly then as now under tall old orange trees and had a simple grace of line: low, rambling, and one-storied. But it was cracked and gray for lack of paint, there was a tin roof that would have ruined a mansion, and the porch was an excrescence, scarcely wide enough for one to pass in front of the chairs. The yard was bare sand spotted with sandspurs, with three lean Duchess rose-bushes left behind to starve, like cats. Inside the house, all the delight of the Florida sunlight vanished. The walls were painted a battleship gray and the floors a muddy ochre. The brick fire-places were walled over with tin and filled with a year's rubbish. It was four years before the gray of the last room

was decently covered with white, money for paint being scarce, and time so filled with other work that an hour with the brush was a stolen pleasure. And even now, the house shining inside and out, roofed with good gray hand-hewn cypress shingles, the long, wide screened veranda an invitation to step either inside or out, the yard in lush green grass, there is still a look of weather-worn shabbiness. It is a constant reminder that wind and rain and harsh sun and the encroaching jungle are ready at any moment to take over.

The battle has not gone too well for all at the Creek. One or two have gone ahead, some hold precariously to the narrow ledge of existence, and others have slipped back and back, until each day's subsistence has become a triumph. Their houses reflect their fortunes. Mine lies the farthest east in the small settlement. To the west are my neighbors, my friends. There have been enmities. At the moment, we are living in unparalleled amiability, a state at Cross Creek that, like a sinner's hope of heaven, is never assured. But it makes a good moment in which to speak of other people.

I live within screaming distance of Tom Glisson and Old Boss Brice. This is literal. No ordinary sound carries from one place to the other. We hear faintly the barking of one another's dogs. We hear the far crowing at dawn of one another's roosters. Occasionally, when the wind is right, I hear the Brice or Glisson cows lowing at milking time, night or morning. No voice carries, ever. A determined scream is audible. This I proved, not in a time of fear, but in a time of fury. I should be ashamed but am not. Of folk who would have been silent under the circumstances, there comes to mind only Saint Francis, and I believe that he might have cast despairing eyes to heaven.

I can bear much physical discomfort and a great deal of actual pain, but now and then one achieves a combination of

bodily annoyances that makes Job's boils seem a luxury. I shall be brief and explicit. I was entirely alone on the grove. The summer was one of the two unbearable ones, as to heat, that I have known in my years here. Summer is our unproductive period for vegetables. I had been some time without them, and was afflicted with an itching rash that I recognized too late as nutritional. The Widow Slater and I had been repairing fences together, for I gave her pasture for her milch cow in return for milking my own. We had ploughed through long vines of poison ivy along the decrepit fence. Her long black flowing skirts had evidently protected her. I had worked stockingless and in brief voile. The poison ivy had erupted from hips to ankle, from finger tips to throat, overlaying the rash.

Soothing ointments and a prone position might have brought some ease. I was far from ointments and too busy to lie down. My cow broke loose from the pasture and came into the grove, tearing at the low-hanging orange boughs. I drove her out and penned her properly, and, returning to the house, found myself in the middle of a patch of sandspurs waist high. These barbed instruments of torture are all the proof one needs that there is a Devil as well as a God. I was enmeshed with sandspurs; they stuck to voile skirt and to petticoat, creeping up underneath and getting a firm hold with one or two barbs, leaving the others free to grate against my skin. On normal skin they are like arrows. On a skin covered with rash and poison ivy, they were shafts of fire. I plucked at them as I went and came to the house. There the dogs were waiting for me, shut on the back porch, since they had nothing but chaos to contribute in the matter of penning a cow.

I did not think they had been there very long. Even for puppies, it did not seem too much to ask of them that they wait like gentlemen for, say, half an hour. There were four, all told. There

was my own puppy. There were two of his litter mates that the traveling owner had asked me to keep for him. There was old Sport, whose huntsman master, my friend Fred, had left with me while he fished on the east coast. I can only relate that time is relative, and that what seemed like a short period to me was evidently a long, long time in the minds of three puppies. Old Sport had become excited at their incontinence and forgotten himself, too. The porch was a shambles. Water for cleansing had to be brought from the outside pump, a bucket at a time. It took twenty buckets, as I remember, and dusk was on me when I finished.

I went then, the porch well cleaned, wet and glistening in the fading light, to water my garden. There were a few carrots that I hoped to bring through the heat, a few zinnias, half a dozen desperate collard plants—poor things but mine own. I pulled away sandspurs abstractedly as I carried out the watering pot. The mosquitoes descended on me. One would think that exposed neck, arms, and face would suffice the hungriest of insects. But a mosquito is Freudian, taking delight only in the hidden places. They wavered with their indecisive flight up under my skirts and stabbed me in the poison ivy, in the nutritional rash, around the sandspurs, and settled with hums of joy in all unoccupied small spaces. It was too much. I set down the watering pot, and with no thought of help for my distress, for I was past helping, let out shriek after shriek of sheer indulgent frustration. As I say, Saint Francis might have blessed the puppies and old Sport and the mosquitoes, with a kind word thrown in for the sandspurs, but I am not of the stuff of saints. I screamed. The screaming satisfied me. I finished the watering, went into the house, fed the dogs, made myself a supper, and went to the veranda to meditate. As I sat, exhausted but content, two figures strolled cautiously up the road and paused in front of my

gate. It was Tom Glisson and Old Boss.

Old Boss called, 'Everything all right?'

'Why, yes,' I said. 'Yes, indeed.'

Tom said, 'Seemed to us like we heard somebody call for help. We just wondered, was everything all right.'

I hesitated. After all, there was nothing to be done, and at the moment, it seemed, nothing too embarrassing not to be told.

'I was singing,' I said. 'Perhaps you heard me — singing.'

'Oh,' they said, and turned and walked home again.

So I say that I live within screaming distance of my nearest neighbors.

III

Old Boss's grove joins up with mine. We share an east-west fence line. Old Boss wandered down to Florida from Georgia as a boy, nearly sixty years ago. He came down to die, he told me once, and wanted to die in the tropical sunshine. He is still a frail little man, but I think he drew sustenance from the sun and earth and the fruiting trees around him. He clerked in a country store in the village and became the owner. He yearned always for the Creek, he said. At last he took over the neglected grove on an unpaid mortgage and moved out. It means to him precisely what it means to me, and we sometimes sit together on his back porch and just look about us and say nothing. We seldom meet, but when we see each other down the road, we wave, and I know that the same warm feeling comes over the old man that comes to me. He has been father, arbiter, disciplinarian to all the Negroes who have ever lived or worked here. I challenged his authority on one occasion, but that is another story. His house is a rococo two-story affair, tall and gangling like an antique spinster. There is bamboo in the sandy yard, and hibiscus and allamanda, and a pittosporum that is so old it is not a shrub, but a great tree,

covered in spring with minute flowers of a strange exotic scent. The house is on the opposite side of the road from mine, just out of sight.

Tom Glisson lives on the same side of the road as I do, just opposite Old Boss. Tom has prospered. He and his wife are Georgia folk, too, and as hard workers as I have ever known. I am not at all sure that Tom can read or write, but he talks well, with a flair for the picturesque and the dramatic. He was put to the plough when he was so small he could scarcely reach the plough handles, he told me. He was given no education.

'I made up my mind,' he said, 'my young uns would get a better chance than their daddy.'

It has been good to see the three children grow tall and bright and handsome. The oldest boy even had a year at the University. The youngest, 'J.T.', was a tragic little cripple when I first knew him. I would see him hobbling down the road on his crooked legs, with the luminous expression on his face that seems peculiar to those we call the 'afflicted.' Tom and his wife were not of the breed to accept an evil that could be changed, and they worked day and night to save money to send the boy away for braces and treatments. Now he too is tall and strong, and I saw him ride by yesterday on his own dwarf mule, talking to himself and lifting his hand to an invisible audience. He was, I knew, the Lone Ranger or perhaps Buck Rogers, but he took time out courteously from his duties to call 'Hey!' to me, then returned to his important and secret activities.

The Glisson house is small and brown, well kept, and the yard has been slowly given shrubs and even a bit of grass. Tom raises hogs and some cattle, has built up a little grove, and he and his wife do anything profitable they can turn their hands to. They have fought ill health as well as poverty, and it is sometimes hard to feel sympathy for what seem offhand less fortunate people,

knowing what can be done with courage and hard work and thrift. Tom and I began with a strange mistrust of each other, and had some harsh encounters. I was in the wrong, and that is a story, too, and now I know him for a friend and would turn to him in any trouble.

There are no further houses until you take the sharp curve in the road that sweeps down to the Creek itself. There is a patch of thick hammock, an open field, and then, on the right, Old Joe's abandoned house. Old Joe Mackay is the last of a good farming family. The Mackay acres were well tilled and profitable some fifty years ago. There has been no regular cultivation for years, though now and then lately some farmer from the village rents the largest cleared field to raise some special crop. Old Joe lived alone in the old Mackay house. He is ageless in appearance, small and stooped and wiry, with his thin face ruddy from being on Orange Lake in every sort of weather. He runs a catfish line for a living. The house is as silver gray as the speckled perch he sometimes catches. It is a tall box of a house and even in its desertion maintains a look of sturdy livability. It was a good house in its day. Something about it is beautiful, its color most of all, and tall palms bend over it, and there are live oaks and holly and a few orange trees around it, and the hammock is a soft curtain beyond it. It was because he had a house that he was able to get a wife. His good friend Tom Morrison found a very pretty widow. He married the pretty widow to Old Joe, and Tom and Old Joe and the widow and the widow's children lived happily in the house.

Tom said, 'Somebody has to look out for Old Joe.'

I suppose the roof leaked, as old roofs do. The cockroaches may have become too abundant in the walls and floors. At any rate, the contented family left the house a few years ago and moved a hundred yards closer to the Creek, into the abandoned church on the

same side of the road. They put up partitions to make rooms, moved the old pews out into the yard, and swept out the hymn books. The church has made a fine home. It sits under a magnificent live oak and is cozy in winter and cool in summer.

The old Mackay house was turned over for a time to Aunt Martha Mickens and her husband, Old Will. The colored population of the Creek has the solid base of the Mickens family, against which other transient Negroes surge and retreat. When old Martha Mickens shall march at last through the walls of Jericho, shouting her Primitive Baptist hymns, a dark rock at the core of the Creek life will have been shattered to bits. She is nurse to any of us, black or white, who fall ill. She is midwife and layer-out of the dead. She is the only one who gives advice to all of us impartially. She is a dusky Fate, spinning away at the threads of our Creek existence.

Martha welcomed me to Cross Creek with old-fashioned formality. She came walking toward me in the grove one bright sunny December day. I turned to watch her magnificent carriage. It was erect, with a long, free, graceful stride. It was impossible to tell her age. She walked like a very young woman, and walks so to this day. She is getting on to seventy; yet glimpsing her down the road she might be a girl. She was dressed neatly in calico, with a handkerchief bound around her head, bandana fashion. She was a rich smooth brown. She came directly to me and inclined her head.

She said, 'I come to pay my respects. I be's Martha. Martha Mickens.'

I said, 'How do you do, Martha.'

She said, 'I wants to welcome you. Me and my man, Old Will, was the first hands on this place. Time the grove was planted, me and Will worked here. It's home to me.'

'Where do you live now?'

'Tother side o' the Creek. We too old now to do steady work, but I just wants

to tell you, any time you gets in a tight, us is here to do what we can.'

'How long has it been since you worked here on the grove?'

'Sugar,' she said, 'I got no way o' tellin' the years. The years comes and the years goes. It's been a long time.'

'Was it the Herberts you worked for?'

'Yessum. They was mighty fine folks. They's been fine folks here since and they's been trash. But, Sugar, the grove ain't trash, and the Creek be's trashified here and there, but it's the Creek right on. I purely loves the Creek.'

I said, 'I love it, too.'

'Does you? Then you'll make out. I reckon you know, you got to be satisfied with a place to make out. And is you satisfied, then it don't make too much difference does you make out or no.'

We laughed together.

She said, 'Heap o' folks has lived here. Ain't nobody has lived here since the Herberts but had to scratch and scramble. The ones loved it stayed 'til death or sich takened 'em away. The ones ain't loved it has moved on like the wind moves.'

I said, 'The grove hasn't always made a living, then.'

'Pends on what you calls a livin'. To get yo' grease an' grits in the place you enjoys gettin' 'em, ain't that makin' a livin'?''

'Yes.'

'Then lemme tell you. Ain't nobody never gone cold-out hongry here. I'se seed the grove freeze to the ground. I'se seed it swivvel in a long drought. But, Sugar, they was grove here before my folks crossed the big water. They was wild grove here as long back as tongue can tell. Durin' the war for freedom the white ladies used to drive out here in wagons and pick the wild oranges to squeeze out the juice and send it to the sojers. And they'll be grove here right on, after you and me is forgotten. They'll be good land to plough, and mast in the woods for hogs, and ain't no need to go hongry. All the folks here ahead o'

you has fit cold and wind and dry weather, but ain't nary one of 'em has goed hongry.'

Hunger at the moment was not immediate, but when it menaced later, I remembered the things the old black woman said, and I was comforted, sensing that one had only to hold tight to the earth itself and its abundance. And if others could fight adversity, so might I.

'I won't keep you,' she said. 'I jes' wanted to tell you I was here.'

She bobbed her head and went away.

IV

We at the Creek draw our conclusions about the world from our intimate knowledge of one small portion of it.

Old Boss said, 'The Creek doesn't amount to anything. The people don't amount to anything. But if you're sick and have no money, they'll cook for you and fetch it to you, and they'll doctor you, and if you get past their doctoring, they'll send for a doctor and pay his bill. And if you die, they'll take up a collection and bury you. I figure it's just as close to heaven here as any other place.'

Martha and Old Boss are the best of us, and we trail on down through those of us doing the best we can with whatever we have to work with, to those who make no effort at all, and these lilies of the field are perhaps the most happily if the least profitably adjusted to life of us all. I think we may have more than the average share of tolerance and generosity. This is because life has not been easy for any of us, and because we live so close to one another's difficulties, in spite of our individualistic detachment, that when one of us suffers, the rest of us are outraged and wounded, too.

We step on one another's toes at the Creek, inevitably, but forgiveness follows quickly. Mr. Martin forgave my shooting of his pig because I 'talked so honest.' Tom Glisson forgave me my injustice against him. Our feud was violent.

One day my beautiful pointer dog, Mandy, struggled home from her morning jaunt down the road and died within a few minutes in convulsions. She had been killed by strychnine poison. I do not know and perhaps shall never know who killed her, or whether the matter was an unaccountable accident. At any rate, I laid the blame on neighbor Tom, for it was reported to me soon after that he had been heard to say he would not have a female dog at Cross Creek. It seemed that backwoods morals were involved. The dog had been in season and I had kept her shut up past the presumably safe two weeks, then had set her loose. The backwoods is prudish, and the mating of animals is not believed to be a salutary thing for the young to observe. It seemed archaic to me to blame the female and not the aggressive males.

I broke off relations with Tom and his friendly family, forbade him to set foot on my land, even to drive out his cows, refused to listen to his explanations, and made dire threats in general. A year passed, a most unpleasant time, for all the Creek was divided. It was necessary for the Glissons to pass my gate with averted heads, and when we met in the village grocery store, embarrassment took over the whole shabby building. At the end of the year, my fences were found cut, and the hogs and cattle of all the Creek were at large in my grove. I believe now that vagrant hunters had taken the easiest way to get themselves and their dogs across the property. At the time, nothing would do but Tom was the culprit.

I sent a note to him: 'Tom Glisson. I wish to see you. Hurry up about it.'

He came, and we laid the cards on the table. I stated my grievances, and one by one he made a fool of me. He had indeed said that he would not have a fe-

male dog at the Creek, but he had meant, not that he would take a hand to prevent another from having one, but that he himself would not choose to have one. He reminded me of his own family's love of animals.

'I couldn't lift my hand against a dumb brute,' he said, and added, 'nor a speakin' one.'

There was an unmistakable integrity in his facing of the facts, going into each situation in detail. His blue eyes were direct and clear. In a revelation, I knew the man's character. Suddenly he burst into tears.

'That note you sent me. I'm as white as you are. You wrote like I was nobody.'

I was sick with shame. I made my apologies, and I was in tears, too. He wiped his away with the back of his calloused hand.

'You abused me once, about the dog, and I forgive you then.'

He laid his big hands on my shoulders.

'I'll forgive you again.'

We shook hands and agreed to a fresh start.

'All we got to do,' he said, 'is jest talk things over and stick together.'

I asked him then why another neighbor had insidiously tried to lay on him the blame about my dog. He thought deeply.

'All I can figure is, he's jealous. He wanted to make trouble for me. He ain't got anywhere in his life. You know how hard me and my wife has worked. You know we want our young uns to git a better chance in life than we've done had. We've got ahead a mite by near about killin' ourselves, workin'. But some folks is jealous of another stridin'.'

Tom is one of my best friends today. It makes one very humble to receive a forgiveness one does not deserve.

NEW AIDS FOR THE WOUNDED

BY JUSTINA HILL

I

THE presence of typhus in the German Armies has brought home to every one of us a question of national importance: how far has science been able to defend the soldier against infection? Answers to that question have been coming in from Dunkirk and Pearl Harbor, from Libya, China, and Russia, from crowded Canadian ports and from our own training camps. We know of the death toll from infection in the last war; are there more hopeful signs in this conflict?

When war intensifies the danger of infection, researches conducted under desperate pressure occasionally yield valuable help; such as the Carrel-Dakin treatment and the improvement in the production of tetanus antitoxin during the last war. But the best research in treatment of wounds goes on during the years of peace in laboratories untroubled by air raids. There is no time to argue therapies when meningitis breaks out in an air-raid shelter. When typhus strikes Madrid or Nashville, insecticides are more important than the precision instruments of research. It is because of experiments conducted within the last years of peace that we can hope in the immediate future to protect the world from tetanus and typhoid, from influenza and typhus.

Since the First World War the wounded have benefited from four powerful aids: the sulfonamides, tetanus toxoid, the Orr-Trueta plaster-cast immobilization, and the availability

of transfusions with which to combat shock. Wound excision or débridement, that is, the removal of all dead and devitalized tissues, remains the basic procedure in the conquest of infection. But this is a surgical operation. In the period between injury and surgical help it is the sulfonamides and immunity against tetanus that hold back the bacterial invaders: these are the critical hours when, in times past, fatal infection all too often set in. Colonel Leonard Colebrook once estimated that the streptococci were responsible for 70 per cent of all deaths due to infected wounds in the last war. In an English hospital, he and Major A. E. Francis recently studied the effect of the local application of sulfanilamide to sixty-two face and jaw injuries. Under this treatment the streptococci almost always disappeared in from three to four days.

Within certain limitations the sulfonamides are of incalculable value both in preventing the infection of wounds and in curing infection. At first these drugs were given by the mouth. Once infection is established, the body's defenses swiftly mobilize; and the sulfonamides were believed to act by paralyzing the bacteria until the intricate antibacterial forces of the body could annihilate them. But it was found that even a heavy diet of sulfonamides taken by mouth could not produce a sufficiently powerful concentration in wounds. Repeated tests showed that amounts of sulfonamides obtained in this way could

kill or inhibit only a small number of certain bacteria and that even this action required several hours. The result was not comparable to the knockout blows of the old-line disinfectants.

Since Dunkirk it has been discovered that, when solid crystals of the sulfonamides are packed into wounds, from seventy-five to a hundred times the concentration of these drugs can be maintained in the tissues of the wound than is possible by oral administration. The increased antibacterial action so obtained is not accompanied by marked injury to the human cells that are so essential for healing. This new therapy does not mean that the surgical toilet of the wound can be omitted. But it does mean that during the time between injury and the operating table the bacteria can be held in check.

It is probable that for our armed forces such sulfonamide prophylaxis will include both the oral administration of one of these drugs and also packing it into the wound as soon as possible after injury. It is obvious that such treatment will become the duty of the casualty clearing station. Both in Great Britain and in this country, sulfanilamide is the preferred drug for this stage of treatment. This drug is more soluble than its descendants; it is especially active against the streptococci of wound infection and it is relatively cheap, a factor that must be considered in view of the large amounts that are needed.

II

Burns are very prevalent in this war, in aerial combat and in naval engagements in which men must often escape through oil-covered waters. At Pearl Harbor more than 60 per cent of the injuries were burns. In this disaster it was found that sulfanilamide powder caked, and this form of application was abandoned. Sulfanilamide in mineral oil provided a combination that was both soothing and antibacterial.

Another preparation for the treatment of burns was introduced by Dr. K. L. Pickrell last August. This is a three per cent solution of sulfadiazine, the baby of the family, in a special solvent, triethanolamine. When this solution is sprayed upon extensive burns, which are then left without dressings, the healing that occurs is incredible to the non-surgical mind, which cannot understand how a human being could be so horribly burned and survive. It is quite possible that in the right solvents the sulfonamides will provide valuable alternatives for the older burn remedies, such as tannic acid or gentian violet jelly, or even replace them. Incidentally, the value of transfusions to counteract the shock that follows severe burns should encourage anyone who has given blood to the Red Cross. Let the citizen donor remember what his plasma means to the burned and wounded on a battleship in action.

Lockjaw, that classic survival from the days of Hippocrates, has been defeated, not by man-made drugs but by clever biological methods. Tetanus is not really an infection, but an intoxication with one of the world's most powerful poisons. The bacilli lurk safely in their hideouts and send forth their toxins like long-range bombers. For many years we have had antitoxin with which to neutralize the tetanus toxin. Because we dare not gamble on our own production of antitoxin after injury, we used horses to produce antitoxin for us. It was such antitoxin that cut the incidence of tetanus in the First World War and that has constantly protected civilians since then.

Antitoxin is not enough: its protection is only transitory. But now, thanks to the newly developed tetanus toxoid, the soldiers and civilians exposed to tetanus hazards can be made actively immune to the disease far ahead of the time of injury. Toxoid is the tetanus toxin itself, made nonpoisonous by chemical treatment. It closely parallels diphtheria toxoid now in such general use. Like a

beneficent rattlesnake deprived of its fangs, tetanus toxoid still retains its power of inciting in us the production of our own antitoxin. Troops are given immunizing injections of toxoid on enlistment, and the immunity so produced is further increased by another injection a month before they go on active duty.

Excellent results with tetanus toxoid were obtained in France, first with cavalry horses, then with men. The Russian Army adopted it in 1937. Italy began to use it in 1938 and there were exactly five cases of tetanus among 500,000 Italian troops engaged in the inglorious conquest of Ethiopia. Ninety per cent of the British forces in the Battle of France had been immunized. There were twelve cases of tetanus among the unprotected, none among the immune, although many of them did not reach England until five or six days after injury. Our own forces are now protected with tetanus toxoid. The soldier's identification tag now bears the letter T followed by the year of its wearer's injections — for example, T40-41.

The situation is more complicated in regard to gas gangrene, the air-hating, evil partner of tetanus. The difficulty is that this disease can be caused by a number of different microbes; consequently the problem of the chemist or of the immunologist is far from simple. In the accidents of peacetime this type of wound infection remains a major danger. In the last war it was one of the chief causes of amputation. Débridement, even if done within a few hours, is not always sufficient to prevent the often hideously rapid spread of this infection. But help has come, again in the sulfonamides. Authorities now recommend the local application of either sulfathiazole or sulfadiazine, not of sulfanilamide. The trouble is that not all the organisms involved in this infection are equally susceptible to any drug, and we cannot expect the clean-cut results here that can be obtained under other conditions with these chemicals.

A better drug may even now be a formula in a chemist's brain or in process of synthesis. Perhaps the logical approach is to prevent the intoxication by means of toxoids. In March 1941, W. J. Penfold, J. C. Tolhurst, and D. Wilson reported such a substance which stimulated the production of antitoxin in twelve human volunteers. If such a toxoid can be perfected, it may well be one of the great advances of this war.

III

Surgeon General Parran states that the British made two miscalculations in their medical preparation for the war. They planned for as many as 30,000 casualties a day — a figure which has not been reached thus far. And they did not foresee a persistence of night bombing that would force thousands of civilians into unsanitary, damp, and overcrowded all-night shelters. It is under these conditions that droplet contagions flourish. This was promptly indicated by a jump in the incidence of epidemic meningitis in England from 1500 cases in 1939 to 12,500 in 1940.

Although epidemic meningitis is caused by a microbe, no method of vaccination against it has been developed. It must be attacked by preventive methods such as the proper spacing of cots, by the detection of carriers during an epidemic, and by treatment after the disease has made its brutal appearance. Until 1937, treatment was entirely with immune serum, the value of which could not be questioned. Dr. A. B. Wadsworth found that in 9760 cases treated with serum the mortality was 36.8 per cent. In a series of 1313 cases that did not receive serum, the mortality was 74.3 per cent.

Translated into human lives, a mortality rate of 36.8 per cent was still too high. It was sulfanilamide that changed the picture, and again, as in wound therapy, this discovery came just in time. From British troops in France in

1940, from our own camps, come reports of lives saved by the use of the sulfonamides. Enormously hopeful are the results of the use of sulfadiazine in a series of thirteen cases of meningitis during the recent epidemic in Halifax. Doctors J. H. Dingle, Lewis Thomas, and A. R. Morton reported in June that, although one case died ten hours after admission, the other twelve recovered promptly and completely. From Cape Town, Doctors F. C. Gray and J. Gear have suggested that, when meningitis hits a camp, men found to be carriers be given sulfapyridine. We may now be assured that when this disease strikes our own youth, as undoubtedly it will, the odds will be overwhelmingly in favor of prompt recovery, thanks to the sulfonamides.

In sharp contrast to meningitis, influenza is a disease not directly influenced by these drugs. Our knowledge of this plague has advanced since the First World War: we now recognize its virus nature and have taken strides towards its prevention by vaccination. Although last year was a lucky one, premonitory rumors have recently come from prison camps in Europe and there has been a fresh epidemic in Puerto Rico. We must hope that science will win in this race between the vaccine and the virus. The American Medical Association reported that in the First World War there were more than 20,000,000 cases and about 450,000 deaths in the United States in less than six months. We must be on guard, for conditions are once again propitious for this world traveler.

The influenza problem is still clouded. Not all strains of the virus are alike. The original one, collected from many parts of the world, causes influenza A. But recently an influenza-like disease swept through a children's hospital at Irvington on the Hudson. No relationship could be established between this virus and the A strain. The second virus has also been found in other parts of the United States and in the West

Indies. We must now recognize influenza A and the new type, influenza B. Influenza C, D, . . . Z may be brewing in some African jungle, Russian steppe, or Icelandic fishing village. One of the most important tasks in the world today is to perfect as rapidly as possible vaccines that will be effective against different strains of this virus. The use of fertile eggs in the preparation of the vaccine may mark an improvement over earlier methods. The electron microscope may also be able to point the way of attack. This we know: the right vaccine will be needed by our armed forces and civilians. Already there is evidence that in vaccinated groups the incidence of influenza may be as much as 50 per cent lower than in the unvaccinated group.

IV

Although medically speaking we have conquered venereal disease, statistics show a wide gap between possibility and achievement. Science knows how to control it but the community is careless. In the First World War 338,746 officers and men of the United States Army were treated for venereal disease. This was the equivalent of twenty-three army divisions, or, according to Surgeon General Parran, to the loss of seven million days of active duty. It is estimated today that, of 16,500,000 men subject to the draft, some 300,000 will be found to have active syphilis. And yet Earle Moore has said that 'syphilis is almost, if not quite, a completely preventable disease.' Syphilitic prophylaxis fails in only about 0.5 per cent of the cases.

Since the First World War there has been great improvement in the diagnosis of syphilis. Increasing recognition of late forms of the disease, the new continuous intravenous injection of arsenic, the malarial treatment of paresis and other types of late neurosyphilis — all are methods that have furthered our control of this infection. In the British Army the venereal disease rate is keeping

low, 8.4 per 1000 men in the first five months of 1941. It can be kept low in our own services, but only through the combined efforts of the men themselves, the medical corps of the services, the Public Health Service, and all state and municipal agencies concerned with the care of enlisted men. Carelessness on the part of any one of these groups will cause a rise in the venereal disease rate. For civilians a follow-up of draftees unacceptable because of active venereal infection is a problem of vital importance to every community.

While the sulfonamides have been of no value in syphilis, their truly astonishing effect upon gonorrhea has revolutionized the treatment of this disease. As each new drug has appeared, it has been tested and found to have some efficacy. The latest of the series, sulfadiazine, may well be the best, although sulfathiazole has shown itself of specific usefulness. But one must view with profound skepticism any claims of 99 or 100 per cent cures of this infection with either drug. Some strains of the gonococcus are resistant to all of the sulfonamides. Such germs persist in acute infections or they retire to the deeper tissues and turn their victim into that most dangerous of persons, a carrier. We know that from such carriers the bacteria can be recovered by new methods which as soon as possible must be part of every public health laboratory. One shudders to think how many carriers must have been turned loose upon an unsuspecting world in the last war for lack of the methods now available. It is now highly probable that sulfonamide-resistant strains of gonococci will necessitate the development of some effective alternatives for these drugs.

The destruction of water mains, as in the bombing of Coventry, instantly creates a public emergency in regard to drinking water. A soldier or a refugee will drink any water he can get, even water from a puddle in a ditch. In our Spanish-American War the typhoid rate

was 141 cases per 1000 men a year. If that rate had continued to the First World War, there would have been 560,000 cases and 56,000 deaths instead of 1529 cases and 277 deaths among 4,000,000 men. Vaccine for our armed forces is made in the Army Medical School in Washington, which prepares some 8500 gallons of this typhoid soup a year. Much work has been done recently to strengthen the vaccine. The source of the bacilli used for this purpose is a tenderly sheltered typhoid carrier in Panama. The vaccine is given our troops combined with the paratyphoid vaccines. With vaccination, sanitation, and control of carriers typhoid fever should remain in exile, an inexcusable filth disease.

Dr. Philip Manson-Bahr, writing of Libya, states that bacillary dysentery is the disease most to be feared in desert warfare. No successful vaccine has been made for this infection. But there is one very promising lead for its conquest. This is in the use of a certain group of the sulfonamides, those effective in the gastro-intestinal tract. The progenitor of what promises to be a long line of drugs was sulfaguanidine, a chemical that first appeared in December 1940, after careful investigation by Dr. E. K. Marshall and his associates. Other and related compounds are now being studied. Such drugs promised to be helpful in two ways: first, in the treatment of intestinal infections; second, in the prevention of peritonitis after operations upon the intestines.

After *Rats, Lice and History* no humbler pen would venture upon the subject of typhus except that the strange germs of this disease, conveyed by lice, have helped to stop Hitler's armies in Russia and may interfere with an advance through Spain to the Mediterranean. The fact that the louse has no national prejudices and passes easily across borders makes this outbreak of typhus in Europe a peril to be faced with all of the knowledge at our command. If experi-

mentally infected typhus rats can be tenderly transported to New York by Clipper, it is not improbable that a few less carefully chaperoned rats or lice might slip in with less publicity. The author too well remembers the day in 1919 when typhus struck a remote Armenian village sheltering thousands of refugee children. The delouser had balked at the mountain passes, and the armamentarium consisted largely of souvenirs of a happier day in the form of Mothersill's seasick remedy and a cleanser for straw hats! It is impossible to say how many of this year's victims in Russia, in the ghettos of Poland or in Spain, will be saved, but medically we are in a much stronger defense position than we were in the last war.

Typhus is not caused by bacteria, but by a curious organism intermediate between them and the filterable viruses. The group of microbes that are responsible for typhus, our own Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and the Japanese disease with the alluring name of *tsutsugamushi* are called *Rickettsiae*, in honor of Howard Taylor Ricketts, the distinguished American scientist who established the nature of these infections and who died of typhus in Mexico City in 1910, a victim of his courageous investigations. One common feature of this group of infections is that they are transmitted by arthropods, a choice selection of which includes lice, wood ticks, and rat fleas.

Epidemic typhus has been one of the great plagues of history. Foci of this infection lurk in the paths of armies in Russia, Poland, Rumania, and Northern Africa. According to Dr. John E. Gordon, there were 135,000 deaths from typhus in a population of 2,500,000 during the Serbian retreat in 1915. There were 10,000,000 cases of typhus in Russia between 1919 and 1922. The mortality varies, but in Europe may be from 10 to 50 per cent. A recent report from Germany indicates a mortality of from 60 to 70 per cent in persons over fifty years of age. Zinsser concluded that the mild Brill's

disease of our northern cities is true European typhus, probably representing relapses from earlier attacks in immigrants from typhus centres of Europe.

There is no need for us to indulge in any feeling of detachment in regard to typhus. We have our own endemic form, the organisms of which can be distinguished from those of European typhus by certain animal tests. Our typhus centres are in Alabama, Georgia, and Texas. In 1939 Nashville had an outbreak of seventy-five cases. This form of the disease is called murine typhus because its agent is the rat, and it is generally carried by rat fleas. It is associated with our peanut-growing areas. Where the rat goes, along the railroad or the highway, or cross-country, infecting wild rodents in his progress, the fleas go too. It is certainly to be hoped that the exigencies of defense will not result in carelessness in either the disposal of garbage or the extermination of rats.

Over the centuries millions of human beings have died in the stupor of typhus; slowly there has been developed a vaccine which at last brings promise of help. Step by step we have progressed from the distasteful grinding up of the intestines of infected lice, to the growing of the organisms in rats exposed to X-rays, on to the delicate tissue culture methods, and thence to what may be the final stage, the use of chick embryos, a method perfected by Dr. H. R. Cox of the National Institute of Health. In Bolivia three American scientists are now studying the efficiency of our typhus vaccine. If our troops must enter typhus-infested regions, in all probability it will be possible to protect them by vaccination. The roll of men who have died fighting typhus is too long, but these results would satisfy the best of them.

As the Indo-Japanese situation becomes acute, that comfortably remote disease, cholera, comes nearer. It has already been reported in Greece and it has often before crept into the Near

East. As late as 1921 an epidemic in the Ukraine flared to 176,885 cases. The conditions there today must be even more favorable for an outbreak. Cholera might easily do more damage than bombs in Japan. Fortunately we have long had a vaccine for cholera and this has recently been improved. But the protection it affords is so short-lived that the vaccine is given only when the disease appears. There is also reason to believe that some of the sulfonamides will be helpful.

Oriental plague, or Black Death, killed one fourth of the world's population in the years from 1314 to 1351. There were 250,000 cases of this disease in the world in 1925. Plague is now endemic in the Near Eastern areas occupied by British troops. There must be grave danger of it in China. We must also remember that plague is harbored by many animals in the western part of our own country. It lurks in ground squirrels and in chipmunks in California and in prairie dogs in New Mexico. If the plague- and typhus-carrying rats should ever stage a first-class demonstration, the results would not make pretty reading. There is a vaccine for plague, but its value seems to be controversial. More encouraging are some reports from Asia that the sulfonamides have been of value in this disease. It is to be hoped that between the rat catchers and the chemists we can keep an extremely firm grip on this merciless pest.

We boast of mosquito control in Panama, but our troops go to Bermuda and to other tropical isles whose picturesque mangrove swamps are full of yellow-fever mosquitoes. We must not forget that the jungle form of this disease is endemic in South America and in Africa. This is a virus disease, not susceptible to the sulfonamides. But since 1936 a vaccine has been made available by the Rockefeller International Board of Health. It is an attenuated virus of the disease grown, like the typhus organisms, in living chick embryos. Since

1938 it has been given to almost 2,000,000 persons in Brazil. A supply is now on hand for our army. It is improbable that the disease will ever again kill the thousands it did in pre-Goethals days. Again sanitation and biology conquer, this time the mosquito and the virus.

Like yellow fever, the ultimate conquest of malaria will be through sanitation. Meantime quinine keeps the Burma Road open. One may lecture learnedly about keeping minnows in the brooks and screens in the windows, but there are many places in the world today where minnows and screens, not to mention windows, are as hard to procure as French wines and avocados. No vaccine has yet been developed for malaria. Quinine remains the great protection of the shivering millions. But this venerable remedy is now supported by atebirin and plasmoquine. Tomorrow the chemical laboratories may give us something better, but perhaps the ditchdiggers will conquer first.

Here, then, is a story of great progress, from the treatment of wounds to the prevention of remote plagues, now brought home to us by the war. These facts are not pleasant, but they are of importance to every person in the world. While we bemoan the hideous events of our era, we may take some consolation in the fact that our enemies are now most of them large and subject to mechanized conquest. The hidden enemies, the microbial foes, are generally in retreat. It takes time to complete their defeat only because of the necessary gap between the knowledge of the laboratories and its application. The space between a Washington laboratory and the remote fastnesses of South America, Arabia, or India must be spanned. When the advances of biology and chemistry can be placed at the disposal of the inhabitants of the dirtiest tent in the outermost haunts of man, the job will be nearing completion. Remember it is less than a hundred years since Pasteur showed the way.

WHY THE LUFTWAFFE FAILED

BY MAJOR ALEXANDER P. DE SEVERSKY

I

THE Junkers 87, better known as the Stuka dive-bomber, has registered on the popular imagination more deeply than any other airplane thus far exhibited in combat. Its swooping, plunging flight has a melodramatic quality that terrifies and sows panic. It suggests ominously the image of an eagle pouncing on its prey. With characteristic thoroughness, the Germans equipped the plane with weirdly wailing sirens to heighten its capacity to inspire fear. Moreover, the Stuka revealed itself to the world, first in Poland and then in Western Europe, as the most conspicuous element in the fearsome blitzkrieg, in a setting of demoralized armies, terrorized refugee populations, and swift collapse of nations.

All this tended to surround this plane with an aura of invincibility, of power far beyond the limited functions for which it had been specifically designed. Even some military experts were too dazzled by the achievements of the Stuka in its appropriate place to recognize its shortcomings when removed from that place. It was hard for them to realize that the very airplane which made the largest contribution to the Nazi conquest of Europe proved worthless in the attempt to invade the British Isles. It is a fact, nonetheless, that unwarranted reliance on this and similar types of aircraft was one of the principal contributing causes of Germany's defeat in the Battle of Britain.

As the basic ingredient in Hitler's

Luftwaffe, indeed, the Stuka stands as a symbol of the essential lopsidedness of that service in Germany. It refutes the puerile assumption in some American circles that Germany is somehow 'a natural air-power nation' with a divine mandate to rule the world in this air-power age.

The Stuka is an all-metal, low-wing monoplane of cantilever construction, with a top speed of 242 miles an hour — 130 miles slower, that is, than its destined nemesis, the British Spitfire fighter. In 1940 its armament consisted of two fixed machine guns in the wings and one flexible machine gun in the rear cockpit, but it was entirely unprotected by machine-gun defensive fire power from underneath. When attacked from the rear, the Stuka had only one light-calibre machine gun to ward off the eight machine guns of the standard Royal Air Force pursuits; attacked from below, it was wholly defenseless. Its striking range is no more than 200 miles, and it usually carries one bomb of 1100 pounds and four of 100 pounds each.

Not until the Battle of England put this airplane to a genuine test were its limitations uncovered in action. The Stukas performed brilliantly on the European continent; first, because in that theatre of war they were able to exploit fully the element of surprise and hence did not meet a real modern pursuit force in reasonably effective strength; and second, because there they did not operate as an Air Power

weapon but essentially as an auxiliary of the Army.

What is true of the Stuka is true, with exceptions, of German aviation as a whole. The chief task of Hitler's air arm in the Low Countries and in France, as in Poland before that, was to coöperate with the mechanized and motorized forces. In the European campaigns, Nazi aviation acted as a vital member of a team. Naturally, it also cleared the skies of hostile aircraft — pursuits engaging enemy planes in the air, and dive-bombers destroying them on the ground through devastating blows on airdromes, fuel concentrations, aviation factories. Meeting little opposition in the air, however, its primary job was to clear the ground for armored columns and motorized troops, helping to cut the enemy armies into ribbons for piecemeal annihilation, demoralizing armed forces and civilian populations behind the main fronts, and cutting interior lines of communication.

The Nazi air arm was basically conceived to deliver short, swift, relatively light blows — the kind that stagger the adversary and leave him helpless against the immediate follow-up by plunging mechanized divisions and an avalanche of motorized infantry behind them. German military aviation, in other words, in the main had been planned and built for simultaneous, coördinated action with surface forces.

The Luftwaffe is a distinctly separate and autonomous military service, on a basis of full equality with the German Army and Navy. The panzer divisions and other ground units do not have any aviation units attached to them permanently. Air support is given at places and in quantities found necessary by the High Command, and any of the available air strength is flexibly at the disposal of any commander of a local land, sea, or air action. Yet, because the main Nazi strategic conception rested on land operations, the German Air Power was primarily geared to answer the tactical demands of such operations. The strat-

egy called for mechanized surface warfare, with the armies crossing only narrow water gaps, which could be readily done under the protection of the coöperating air force. That pattern dominated the creative minds entrusted with the designing of air equipment.

This, in the final analysis, resulted in a certain bias. While the Luftwaffe was separate and entirely autonomous, the emphasis on land operations affected the equipment in a way that showed up unfavorably in all-out air action. The kind of blows the Luftwaffe was capable of delivering, its restricted effective range of operation, its inadequacies in speed and fire power and protective armor, made it almost useless when there were no land forces present to *exploit the initial demoralization* — that is to say, in an unadulterated aerial assault against an enemy air force and vast ground targets. In short, German vision and audacity failed to go far enough.

The invasions of Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg, and France were undertaken almost simultaneously on May 10, 1940. Four days later the Dutch armies gave up resistance. On May 16, Germany broke through the Maginot Line at Sedan. By May 21, Hitler's war machine reached the English Channel at Abbeville; a week thereafter King Leopold of Belgium surrendered.

There was a pause in the German onward sweep at the Somme River, when the Nazi High Command seemed, to most observers, to be debating whether to pursue the advantage southward toward Paris or to swing northward to attack England. The British Isles squared themselves for the latter contingency.

The pendulum of public sentiment swings hysterically from extreme optimism to extreme pessimism and back again. When Hitler launched the Norwegian campaign, observers on the whole were sure that he was slated for disaster, though it should have been obvious that no naval force could block the German invasion of that country. Now, as the

Germans stopped for breath behind the Somme, the same observers, reflecting the unreasoned popular feelings, were no less sure that Hitler could go on into England. They were wrong again. Before the Nazis could dream of diverting their campaign from France into England, they had to reduce the Royal Air Force to impotence. And to accomplish that they had to bring the Luftwaffe within striking distance by building and equipping a string of air bases. They had to organize an uninterrupted line of supplies, fuel, spare parts — and all this under the continual harassment of British airplanes. Also, they had to provide the necessary transport for moving expeditionary forces across the Channel. Without such preparations the German machine could not keep rolling across the water gap.

Ignoring these elementary considerations, the prophets of doom, official and civilian, held the floor.

II

It is important to try to understand why Hitler met his first and most significant setback, because it has much to teach us about German aviation in particular and about air warfare in general. Let us therefore look at the aerial weapons with which Britain and Germany confronted each other across the English Channel in the nerve-racked summer of 1940.

The Germans had a formidable numerical preponderance. Accurate figures cannot be ascertained, but an estimate of 3000 Nazi pursuit fighters against 1200 British fighters seems reasonable from the available information. Both sides, of course, possessed more, but these were roughly the units thrown into the battle over Southeastern England. For bombers the Nazis' quantitative advantage was even greater. As the attacker, moreover, Hitler had the advantages that accrue to the initiator of an action.

We have considered the Junkers 87,

or Stuka, the basic element in Germany's aerial equipment. The Nazis also used a twin-engined dive-bomber, the Junkers 88, with a speed of 300 miles, a crew of four, and a striking range somewhat more extended than the Stuka's 200 miles. It was equipped with three machine guns: one flexible machine gun firing forward, operated by a gunner in front of the pilot; and the other two in the rear, one above and another below the fuselage. Slower by some twenty-five miles, but otherwise similar, was the horizontal bomber Heinkel III Mark V, also a twin-engined, low-wing monoplane. There were, in addition, variants of the Dornier 17, or so-called 'flying pencil,' in the array of level-bombers.

The general military characteristics of all these twin-engined bombers were similar. They were fast for their time, but the speed had been bought at a serious cost in fighting ability. The Germans had sacrificed range, load-carrying capacity, armor and armament, for the sake of additional miles per hour. The effective radius with a full explosive load was only about 600 miles — about half of the British range. The bomb capacity, varying with the range of operation, averaged a ton.

Aside from the limited orbit of operations with large loads of explosives, the most serious handicap of the German bombers was insufficient defensive fire power. In most instances they could meet an eight-gun assault from a British pursuit with only one gun, making a hopeless ratio of eight to one. Had Hitler's bombardment aviation carried adequate combat power, they might have succeeded in fighting their way through to appointed targets, destroying British Air Power aloft and its sources on the ground; thus, a reversal of the whole battle might have resulted.

The amazing shortsightedness of the Germans in respect to aircraft armament may be judged by the fact that, even in the First World War, bombers were normally better armed than those on

which Hitler relied for his conquest of England. Twenty years before the Nazis built their flocks of Stukas and Heinkels with only one gun against pursuing planes, twin guns were employed for protection against stern attacks.

In the fighter class, the Messerschmitt 109, equipped with the Daimler Benz engines, developing 850 horsepower at the start of the war and gradually boosted to the present 2000 horsepower or thereabouts, was the standard type. The great mass of Messerschmitts at the beginning of the war did not have more than 325 miles an hour speed, though later models in the Battle of Britain could do better than 350 miles. The Messerschmitt 109 had six machine guns — four in the wings and two in the fuselage, firing through the propeller, with a consequent lowering of the rate of fire. A cannon firing through the propeller shaft was installed later.

The Messerschmitt 110 was a two-seater fighter, powered with two Daimler Benz engines. It had two fixed cannons in the fuselage and four fixed machine guns, all firing forward through the nose. Like all twin-engined planes, it could not manoeuvre as easily or as rapidly as the single-engined Messerschmitt 109. Occasionally the Nazi fighter force also employed the Heinkel 113, which had a good margin over the Messerschmitt in performance. The Germans claimed 380 miles per hour for this fighter, but apparently because of some defect it never appeared in quantity. It should be noted that, because these pursuits could shoot only or chiefly forward, they were handicapped for their important function in convoying bombers. True convoy fighters call for entirely different disposition of armament, and different military characteristics.

British aviation, while numerically weak, had come closer to achieving the military characteristics of true Air Power. In scale these qualities may have been inadequate, but the underlying conceptions were correct. British bombers sac-

rificed speed for defensive armament, range, and bomb load, which is a justifiable exchange. Since bombers cannot get away from fighters anyhow, speed becomes a secondary consideration. RAF bombers were equipped with front and rear turrets, housing two and four machine guns, and were able to fire them backward through an arc of 180 degrees.

The backbone of the British fighter command was the Spitfire, which was and remains the most effective single-engined fighter in the world. It had a speed of 370 miles which has since then been raised to over 400 miles. Its eight machine guns, installed in the wings, were free-firing. In speed, armor, fire power, and disposition of guns, it was superior to the Messerschmitt. The Hurricane, second in importance in the fighter command, was a somewhat larger plane, with a top speed of only 335 miles, but very manoeuvrable. (The present Hurricane is powered with a Napier engine, has a speed of 400 m.p.h., and carries four 20 mm. cannon or twelve machine guns.) In the beginning the British defenders also used the Boulton-Paul Defiant, a two-seater pursuit fighter with a speed of about 300 miles, but the Germans soon discovered the absence of protective armament from below and forced the RAF to restrict its use to night fighting.

A fair qualitative ratio of Nazi and British fighting aircraft in the Battle of Britain is provided by the Spitfire and the Messerschmitt. The advantage in the confrontation was indisputably in favor of the British. The Spitfire had a margin of twenty-five miles an hour in speed. Though it did not at that time have a cannon, it had two more machine guns — none of them handicapped by synchronization through the propeller — and hence a greater volume of fire. Flying qualities were approximately the same, with a slight advantage for the British, since the Spitfire was better than the Messerschmitt at stalling speeds and manoeuvring.

The amazement and terror evoked by the blitzkrieg triumphs in Europe fortified the myth of German Air Power. The less discriminating the observer — even if he happened to be an aviator himself — the more shrill he became in glorifying the alleged genius of the Nazis in the science of military aeronautics. In a few instances this unrestrained and uncritical admiration for German aviation served to warp the whole outlook of Americans on the world we live in. Certain in their own minds and nerves that Hitler's Luftwaffe was invincible, they yearned to make terms with the inevitable and the preordained; they could not and would not concede even the possibility of aerial defeat of Germany.

The Battle of Britain, however, cannot be explained unless and until we acknowledge the qualitative superiority of British Air Power for the specific task of seizing and holding the skies.

III

The Battle of Britain, a pamphlet summing up the official British Air Ministry record for the period August 8 to October 31, 1940, distinguishes four phases in that epochal struggle.

The first, from August 8 to August 18, was marked by a concentrated all-out attack on Channel convoys, the south-eastern coast and harbors of England, and the airdromes located in that area.

In the second, from August 19 to September 5, the aerial fire of Germany was directed against inland fighter airdromes.

The third phase, from September 6 to October 5, compassed the mighty attack on London, seat of the Government and heart of the British Empire.

Finally, in the fourth phase, which the Air Ministry dates as October 6 to October 31 but which has really continued since then, the Luftwaffe has been attacking the entire country in night raids, in a diversified action against all vital objectives.

Behind this matter-of-fact recapitulation of the campaign lies a clear record of Nazi aerial failure. The Air Ministry account at several points indicates frank bafflement at the shifting of the Nazi strategy in these various stages. With no apparent or sufficient cause, the conflict kept entering a new phase of operation without having brought the preceding phase to a conclusion. But by now we have enough detailed information from official and unofficial sources to permit a consistent analysis of what happened.

I am convinced that the failure of the first all-out effort to capture the south-east segment of English sky astonished and shocked the Germans. Whatever misgivings they may have entertained on the further developments, they gambled optimistically on that initial success. The startling loss of this gamble, throwing doubt on their fundamental strategic ideas, left the Nazis as bewildered as the French had been by the crumbling of the defensive Maginot Line strategy. The bewilderment was merely deepened by the miscarrying of the second stage of the undertaking. Far from adhering to a rigid program or schedule, as some have supposed, the German High Command was forced to improvise in an almost panicky spirit as it went along.

Curiously, it may well have been the British success at Dunkirk which encouraged Hitler and his associates in their self-assured expectation of easy access to England. It had been possible for the Royal Air Force, under exceedingly unfavorable conditions, to achieve a local if temporary air mastery over a corridor of Channel stretching from Dunkirk to England. The Nazis consequently estimated that they could do the same, and even more easily. As for the setback at Dunkirk, they preferred to credit that to extraneous circumstances — such as their lack of prepared bases and the resultant inability to exercise their numerical advantage — rather than to the intrinsic superiority of British air equipment.

The Luftwaffe attacked the coast from

Weymouth to the Thames Estuary, pounding Portland, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Dover, Norwich, and striking at the fighter airdromes in the area — at Dover, Hawkinge, Middle Wallop, Biggin Hill, even as far as Croydon. The tactical objective was to seize local air domination and under its cover to land a great expeditionary force.

Goering threw his Stukas and Heinkels and Messerschmitts into the enterprise unsparingly. The fact that he lost at least 697 aircraft in the first ten days is a measure of the fury and profligacy of the onslaught. He was willing to pay any price for that invasion bridgehead and counted on overwhelming numbers to make up the differential in aviation performance. His calculations proved wrong. It is true that the British pilots, because of their numerical weakness, were overworked, being obliged to fly and fight from dawn to dusk and beyond. But in the end it became apparent that numbers without adequate quality are well-nigh worthless against a determined opponent properly equipped.

Notwithstanding initial failure, the Luftwaffe continued to fight an advance action for the ground forces waiting on the other side of the Channel. When Messerschmitts showed themselves unable to eliminate the British Spitfires and Hurricanes in the air, the attackers evidently decided to eliminate them on the ground, in their airdromes. They assumed — mistakenly, as they soon learned — that the RAF fighter command, being chiefly concerned with the defense of the coastline, would be concentrated within easy reach, and that as a result the airdromes would be packed tight with aircraft.

But the RAF had profited from the experience of the Polish and the French airmen. Instead of bunching their planes at known spots where the enemy could attack them by surprise, the British wisely dispersed them in the environs of the bases, singly and often under camouflage.

Some airdromes were quickly put out of action in the second phase of the battle. But the birds had flown these nests. Before long the RAF was locating and intercepting the invading aircraft and cutting heavily into their strength. The German bombers were like so many clay pigeons for British fighters, and few of them ever reached their targets. In this second phase the Nazis lost at least 562 aircraft at a cost of only 119 to the British.

Failure to defeat the British fighter command meant failure to accomplish the preliminary objective: the capture of aerial control as a prelude to invasion by land forces. It meant that the German invasion program was doomed. Hitler's High Command had planned a combined land, sea, and air lightning stroke against the island, analogous to the stroke against Norway, to be broadened subsequently into a campaign analogous to those on the mainland. This did not materialize. Instead the Germans unexpectedly faced a prolonged all-air struggle, for which they were neither equipped physically nor prepared psychologically. An all-air struggle it has remained throughout, with the armies and navies on both sides, rather to their own surprise and chagrin, reduced to the rôle of impotent spectators.

As the shortcomings of their aircraft became manifest, almost from the first day, the Germans kept shifting their formations, increasing and rearranging their pursuit convoys, desperately seeking to convert their numerical strength into tactical values. The obvious lack of clarity and sureness in the tactics during these critical days and in the subsequent phases of the battle may justly be taken as proof that the Germans were as backward in their air strategy as in their air equipment; the two things go together as a matter of course. But no matter how the invading planes jockeyed, the faster, deadlier British craft beat them to the punch. The Germans lacked the appropriate equipment, and

the attempt to use makeshift equipment proved costly and useless.

The failure of the second phase of the battle underlined the bankruptcy of Germany's aerial conceptions. For the first time, perhaps, the High Command was obliged to concede that there was some logic to the contentions of aeronautical 'visionaries' who had foreseen and foretold an all-air war in which the other services would be supernumeraries. At that point, no doubt, the mirage of a simultaneous land, sea, and air campaign against England began to evaporate. The realization probably dawned in Germany's Army minds that joint movement on two levels, the surface and the air above it, is impossible when the upper level is in hostile hands — that mastery of the air *must come first*.

In any case, it is apparent that Germany's Air Power was finally released, at that point in the Battle of Britain, to fight on its own, simply and solely as an air force. It was given a free hand to act as a genuine and independent strategic arm, not merely as an advance agent of the Army.

Marshal Goering's Luftwaffe began its new phase of activity with an attempt to destroy London. This harked back to textbook strategy of the Army type, which had always regarded the capture of the enemy's capital as a first goal. Under modern conditions, the capital is not as vital an objective as in the past; modern communications and other technical advances now enable a government to function from almost any place. The attack also fitted into General Douhet's aerial doctrine, prescribing an attack on an important and sentimental or emotional target with a view to coaxing the entire defensive aviation into action and forcing it to accept combat. London was certainly that sort of target. But the Douhet doctrine holds good only when the attacker has sufficient integrated combat power. Hitler's aviation decidedly did not possess this. Inevitably the assault on London resulted in a

wholesale slaughter of the attacking German aircraft without strategic gains for these losses. By no stretch of the imagination could the annihilation of blocks of city residences affect the strength of British Air Power, which should have been the primary Nazi objective.

For a while the Nazis tried to maintain their morale by concealing the magnitude of their losses from the Luftwaffe personnel. For instance, they ordered pilots to land at airdromes other than those from which they had taken off, so that they would be unable to check up on the casualties. But the looming extinction of their own forces finally undermined the self-confidence of the leaders and the attack on London was called off.

There is strong reason to suppose that the all-out assault on the British capital, if it had been kept up a few weeks longer, might finally have succeeded. In the long run, overwhelming mass and continuity of action have their effects. The RAF pilots were brave and skilled, but relatively few and overworked beyond human endurance. It is possible that they might not have held out during another thirty days' unrelieved bombardment. But Marshal Goering saw his aerial armada and his men being whittled down almost to the point of elimination, while he had no way of estimating losses by the enemy, which seemed invincible. It is not at all out of the question that he stopped the offensive just in time to waste his whole investment.

Having learned the tragic effect of the inferiority of their aviation the hard way, the Nazis refrained from further bold bombardment of predetermined targets protected by concentrated aerial forces. Instead they decided to exploit the element of surprise. They began to scatter their strength by attacking a great variety of targets over a huge area. Their efforts resolved into a haphazard attempt at aerial blockade of the British Isles. In this they again disclosed their

confusion. They should have known in advance that successful blockade cannot be enforced until the opposing force is neutralized or eliminated. They could do neither to the RAF.

Shortness of range automatically safeguarded important industrial objectives farther north and counted out the Stukas except in the southeast of the island. A few experiments in daylight bombing ended disastrously for the Germans. Hitler's planes did not possess the combat power for bold day operations, nor the bomb capacity to make them decisive.

Thus the Germans were restricted to the comparatively ineffectual night hours. The destruction accomplished in night raids from the very high altitudes may be enormous; surely there is no call to minimize the total death and property destruction and dislocation of everyday existence achieved by this method. But in raiding under the veil of darkness the aim is necessarily haphazard, and the type of methodical, planned annihilation of specific military and morale targets essential for victory is made difficult if not impossible. The hope of cracking British morale by means of such hit-and-miss tactics soon faded.

In desperation Marshal Goering resorted to a trick which Russia used in the First World War. In 1917 the German Navy was pressing its entry into the Gulf of Riga. The Germans brought in so many pursuits that our bombers were easily intercepted and destroyed. Because of range shortage, the pursuits under my command could not protect them. Under these circumstances the tasks of the bombers reverted to the pursuits. Equipped with extra gas tanks and bomb racks, we attacked shore fortifications and the German Navy, only to find that we lacked the Striking Power to do real damage. Twenty-three years later the Germans, at this stage in the Battle of Britain, similarly converted their pursuits into bombers.

They were no more successful than

we had been. The improvised bombers could deliver only weak explosive loads, which are useful in coöperative action with land forces, but were inadequate as an Air Power weapon. Approaching in daylight, they were soon forced into combat. They thereupon had to unload their bombs, willy-nilly, and revert into pursuits. Outclassed, they were doomed as soon as overtaken. The expedient was abandoned and nothing remained to the Germans but more night raids, an operation which has become increasingly hazardous as counter-measures, such as radio detection of night fighters, have progressed.

From August 8 to October 31, the Germans lost 2375 aircraft in England in daylight. The Air Ministry figure, clearly on the modest side, does not include planes destroyed in night fighting, aircraft damaged, and the large number which unquestionably succumbed over the Channel and beyond it on their retreat from England. In a single day, on September 15, the Luftwaffe left 185 of its planes in England. This immense investment had killed some thousands of Englishmen, wrecked a vast amount of British property, destroyed some RAF planes and pilots. But tactically it had got Hitler nothing.

Seven years of Nazi concentration on aerial preparedness thus ended in fiasco. Only the impressiveness of the preceding European victories blurred this fact. A Luftwaffe which had proved well suited to act with the Army and the Navy showed up as helpless in unadulterated air combat.

In the United States the full growth of Air Power had been retarded by the inertia and the mental timidity of old-line Navy and Army leaders with whom the final decisions rested. These brakes on air development did not exist in Germany, where the revolutionary Nazi mentality broke through traditional restraints. The Nazis, kicking over all traditional notions, new to political power and hence with less to *unlearn*,

broke through traditional barriers. Broke through — but stopped far short of an Air Power as self-contained in its actions in the air as navies used to be in their actions on the seas.

On the basis of the Battle of Britain, a good many American military experts jumped to the rash conclusion that Air Power alone cannot achieve a definitive victory over an enemy. This is not only erroneous but, to the extent that it may influence our American aviation ideas and war strategies, also mischievous.

The fact that the Germans failed to knock out England from the air does not mean that knockouts from the air are impossible. It means only that Germany was not properly prepared to knock out England. One might as reasonably argue that guns cannot kill tigers because a volley of buckshot cannot do it. In claiming that Air Power can, under certain circumstances, win a battle or a war, we necessarily assume that the appropriate strategy, tactics, and weapons for that purpose are available.

The German four-engined Condor, in flying from Berlin to New York non-stop, had to carry about 20,000 pounds of gas. The same type of plane, in a flight from the French coast to London and back, would need only about 5000 pounds of fuel. The difference of some 15,000 pounds might have been used to provide adequate defensive fire power, with enough margin to spare for a load of explosives that might have worked as much havoc in a single raid as was accomplished by fifteen Stuka dive-bombers or seven horizontal-bombers of the sort used in the Battle of Britain. Hitler, had he foreseen the need, could have possessed an armada of such bombers and the whole story would have been quite different.

The possibilities of destruction from the skies have scarcely been touched. Germany has failed in this as completely as other nations, and the failure to conquer the British Isles with the Luftwaffe is the irrefutable proof.

Just as the scientist learns from an unsuccessful experiment how to achieve success in the next try, so the Battle of Britain has given aerial strategists proof that nations can be wrecked and forced to surrender from the air alone. In the very shortcomings of Nazi equipment for such an enterprise they can see clear indications of the future development of equipment to match the tactical task. The student of aerial warfare can discern the nature of the German errors and, therefore, how they can be avoided and how to score a decision through Air Power. Those errors are twofold:—

1. The attempted strategic bombardment of a nation without sufficient combat power to eliminate or neutralize the opposing Air Power. If German bombers, instead of carrying three single machine guns, had been equipped with *turrets* like the British bombers, each housing four machine guns, Hitler would have been spared his four to one ratio of losses. Four times as many British planes would have been shot down, and this drain on the RAF might easily have given Germany mastery of the English skies.

2. A mistaken choice of the vital target. Those thousands of planes and pilots invested in striking at London might have been expended more intelligently against key industrial centres; against production units of the aviation industry, especially those related to the fighter command, such as the Rolls-Royce engine plants as well as Spitfire and Hurricane plants. That would have amounted to a double-barreled attack on the opposing air force, eliminating it simultaneously in the air and on the ground. In fine, the Germans used the wrong kind of air force at the wrong place.

We must assume that our enemies, too, have learned the lessons of the struggle for English skies. Presumably they are putting all their inventive and engineering skills behind new weapons alongside which the Luftwaffe of the Battle of

Britain will seem utterly primitive. They are weapons, we may be sure, shaped for long-range attack not only on the British Isles but on a larger 'island': the American continent.

Axis preoccupation with closer, more immediate targets, however, is likely to delay practical construction of adequate all-out transoceanic aerial equipment. That, in turn, gives us the chance to get a head start — provided we begin now! Tactically speaking, the 2000 to 3000 mile gap between the Aleutian Islands and Japan is just another English Channel. Despite the larger geographical scale, we can succeed where the Germans failed.

Much of the new American aerial equipment has greater range and greater combat power than the aviation the Nazis were able to throw against Brit-

ain. But such things are wholly relative. For the tasks that face America our equipment is even more backward than the German Luftwaffe proved in the Battle of Britain. Our aviation has been conceived exclusively as one element in the triumvirate of land, sea, and air forces. Even in our most recent aircraft, no provision has been made for the kind of Air Power that can strike on its own at the enemy's primary sources of military vitality.

If we are expelled from the Southern Pacific, we shall lose the possibility of the relatively short jumps from island to island in the roundabout approach to Japan itself. We shall then have no alternative but to fight directly from the American side of the Pacific. It is our duty to prepare for such a contingency now. The Battle of Britain shows us how.

VICTORY IS IN THE AIR

BY FRANCIS VIVIAN DRAKE

I

THE nature of an Axis attack has been blueprinted for us ever since Hitler's invasion of Poland. The prescription for each success has followed the same clear-cut formula. The formula insists that initial Striking Power devolve primarily on the air units instead of, as heretofore, on naval and military units. Norway, Crete, Britain, Manila, Malaya — each attack began with a bolt from the blue.

To lose this war, we have but to carry on the World War I formula of using Air Power as an auxiliary agency. To win this war, we must make up our minds to use Air Power not in its obsolete sense,

not even as it was used a year ago, but with the realization that new and immense Air Power must be the very spearhead of our attack upon the enemy.

The final objective of every war is the destruction of the enemy's nerve centre, his inner citadel.

In the present war, the enemy's citadels are those small zones in which are concentrated the complicated machinery and high-powered assembly lines and factories of modern machine production. They work forever under strain. Their output is never enough for the incessant demand.

The citadel of the Nazis is the small zone that lies roughly between South and Central Germany. The citadel of Japan is an even smaller zone, chiefly on the island of Honshu, which contains Yokohama, Tokyo, Kobe, Osaka — the heavy industries. The strain upon these citadels is increased by every victory as well as by every defeat. The further the advance from the citadel, the greater becomes the strain. We are now witnessing a series of great hammer blows throughout the Pacific — in the Philippines, Malaya, China, the East Indies, and Australia; but all these activities increase Japan's area of insufficiency in machine power. Every hammer blow has its genesis in that one small area in Japan, from which must come every plane, every spare engine, every spare tread for a tank, every torpedo, shell, and bomb.

Nazi Germany supported the strain so long as her conquests were geographically within easy range of her citadel — that is, so long as they included only France, Norway, and Denmark. Since she has lunged into the remote distances of Libya and Russia, the strain upon the Nazi citadel has become terrific, and it becomes greater every week.

Between them, the two Axis citadels are trying to support a world conquest. The fact remains, however, that no matter how far-flung their temporary gains, a knockout blow against these citadels must bring inevitable collapse, just as a house of cards collapses when the base cards are removed. In the past, destruction of the citadel has had to be accomplished by crushing the enemy from the outside, driving toward the centre, using a battering ram of human flesh. We have had a series of long and bloody battles, the slow crippling and exhaustion of the enemy's Armies and Navies and the destruction of his reserves; finally there came the collapse of his unprotected citadel.

Hitler has enormously accelerated this process. Air Power is his spearhead,

and for his battering ram he has used tanks instead of unprotected flesh. To blast his way into the inner citadel, he has still relied upon his surface forces.

Wherever Hitler has relied only on his Air Power, notably in the Battle of Britain, he has drawn negative results; therefore, argue the die-hards, Air Power, by itself, may be dismissed as inconclusive. To demonstrate the fallacy of this view we have only to examine the facts.

The essence of Hitler's failure to smash the British citadel was not that he lacked sufficient planes, but that he lacked sufficient aerial Striking Power. Numerous as were his bombers, there is no doubt whatever that he miscalculated the weight of explosives an average town is able to withstand. Instead of smashing British industrial centres, the medium-weight German bombs have succeeded at most in temporarily crippling them; not even in the cases of Birmingham and Coventry has bombing *decisively* affected British armament production. This is not the fault of Air Power. This is the result of having used the *wrong kind* of aerial Striking Power, of having attempted to do a specific job without the proper tools.

The heaviest German attacks on London used a maximum of 300 to 400 tons of medium bombs a night. The attacks were rarely continued for more than three or four nights in straight succession. The raid on Birmingham used about 400 tons during a single night; the raid on Coventry used a maximum of 400 tons for two nights in succession. The factor that has emerged in large-scale bombing operations — miscalculation of which must in the end cost Hitler the war — is what one might term the shock-absorbing or rallying factor of communities: that is, the ability of targets, whether civilian or land targets, to withstand explosive impacts of major extent, to pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and keep right on going. The small Nazi bombs, the 300 to 400 tons of bombs per night routine,

came fortunately within this limit of resistance. However, had the Midland raids been continued for two additional nights the cities could not have been rebuilt: the debris of tens of thousands of houses would have been so great that it would have been easier to rebuild the cities on new sites. A limit there is, and must be, for even the stoutest hearts. Raids involving bombs of 4000 pounds, raids *that release from 3000 to 5000 tons of bombs a night*, mean that any target in the world is finished.

II

It is frequently remarked that America was asleep at the switch before our entry into World War II. This criticism cannot be applied to our bomber design. Quick to figure out the key reason for Hitler's failure to demolish Britain, and disregarding opposition, delay, and lack of authority, our designers took it squarely on themselves to overcome the problem that had stumped the Axis. Their answer was a deadly one. In 1941, on a test flight over Germany, an experimental American-built bomber carrying enormous bombs leveled an entire city block with the impact of a single bomb and became a legend to the dumfounded RAF.

We have to thank our designers for the fact that the United States now has under construction the proper instruments for the destruction of the Axis citadels. Thanks to them, we have in production a long-range Striking Power — planes unprecedented in size, destructive power, range, and, above all, in numbers. These heavy bombers can fly well over 1000 miles, do their job, and return without refueling. They can speed 300 miles an hour. They can carry two to four tons of heavy bombs apiece, depending on the distance of their target — heavier bombs than any the world has yet known. For the production of these planes we have already constructed plants greater in size than

those of the entire automotive industry of the United States. Construction of these arsenals of Striking Power has naturally taken time; that is why only the first shadow of our new air armada is now beginning to emerge. By 1943 we shall produce these great four-engine bombers at the rate of more than 500 per month, and also a much larger number of long-range medium bombers. This is an Air Striking Power as different from that of Hitler as Niagara is different from a fire hose.

In this difference lies our opportunity for victory — in the difference between their 300 tons of bombs and our 3000 tons; between their intermittent bombing and our potential power to maintain for months uninterrupted bombing that will reach into the very heart of Southern Germany and Japan. Last but not least is the significant fact that this frightful tonnage of missiles will not fall upon a people possessing the deep reserves of the British, but upon a people who have been promised immunity from bombing; on factories manned by a population that for years has been underfed, underclothed, and overworked.

III

Extremists have inferred that the great surface forces — the navies, the armies, the battleships, the armored tanks — are now no longer of vital importance. This is plainly untrue. Air Power I have likened to a spearhead, but it is only a part of the whole attack. In itself it is as impotent as a bullet without a gun. It cannot act alone; to be effective it must be integrated and sustained. For instance, the Navy urgently needs the blasting power of the Air Corps heavy bombers. The Air Corps needs the Navy to help it locate and recognize the enemy on the high seas. Later on, the Air Corps will need huge-scale cooperation from the Navy in transporting the ground material for a vast air offensive. It will need the Army to protect

its bases. In time of peace, each has kept the other at arm's length; now they have tremendous need of each other, in every theatre of war, every day and every night. It is not too much to say that victory depends not only upon the full use of Air Power as a primary weapon, but upon a genuine and intimate coöperation between Air Power and the surface forces. Hitherto, this coöperation has not existed. There is nothing to prevent it. It can and must be effected.

First of all, we must have forward bases from which to operate. The reason the Axis cannot effectively bomb the United States today is that it has no forward bases. The United States, on the other hand, can bomb Germany because we can use England as a forward base. Across the Pacific our bases still have to be established, as close to Japan as England is to Southern Germany.

For the destruction of the Japanese citadel, it has been estimated that we shall require more than 1000 heavy bombers, operating from bases 700 to 1000 miles from their objective. These bases must contain all the maintenance and repair facilities essential to the task of keeping 1000 great planes in the air. (To get some idea of these gigantic requirements, it may be noted that the entire commercial air system of the United States consists of not more than 350 medium planes.) For these bases, equipment must be constructed. Cargo ships must be reserved, naval convoys planned; huge supplies of gasoline, lubricating oil, bombs, spare engines, and spare parts must be assembled. It will take months before the cumbersome ground paraphernalia of a great Striking Force can be moved to a battle station overseas. On top of this, we must transport the trained men, the mechanics, radio operators, electricians, and engineers. Finally, and equally important, we must transport the soldiers, tanks, guns, long-range pursuit planes, and powerful anti-aircraft batteries essential to protect each base from destruction or

capture. Only when all this is done can the spearhead of big bombers be flown overseas and the signal for attack be given. This whole scheme obviously represents an undertaking of the greatest magnitude. Costly as it may be, however, it will not be a fraction of the cost in lives or dollars involved in one great sea battle; and unlike one sea battle, it will be conclusive.

Across the Atlantic, there is already established a great forward base in the fortress that is England. Here there are facilities; but for our air armada in the making, they are still not big enough. For the war against Germany, additional bases will have to be built. This means another procession of ships carrying fuel, bombs, spares, and all the sinews of the Striking Force, before our bombers can be massed in England for the final blow. Bases for 5000 heavy bombers would enable us to use up to 3000 bombers at a time over Germany. They could deliver against the Nazi citadel *12,000 tons of bombs a night*.

No flesh and blood, no Nazi will-power, no air defenses, no patriotic exhortations, can possibly withstand such fury. It can produce only one answer — the collapse of Nazi Germany.

For us, time is the paramount factor. The strongest words in the language are inadequate to describe its importance. At present we have our golden opportunity, while Hitler's citadel strains to supply the Russian front. *If we delay, if Hitler can build his Striking Power first, England will be knocked out of the war. If England is conquered, Hitler's Air Power will be available in enormous quantities to Japan, and the United States might lose the war.* What we can do to others, others may do to us. The headlong speed of Air Power makes all depend on *time*.

IV

Knowing what we need, how do we get it? How shall we get it in the shortest space and with the fewest setbacks,

mistakes, and extravagances? Here we turn the searchlights on ourselves.

The United States at this moment, in its wild race for rearmament, is exalting production — any and all production — at the cost of common sense. We are allowing non-essentials as well as essentials to ravage our resources, on the theory that if we have three of everything we must automatically become thrice-armed. There is not enough raw material available to make three of everything, nor is there enough manpower available to turn it out. Even if there were, we are blinding ourselves to this restraining fact: whether or not our capacity to produce is unlimited, our capacity to transport is not. *Only that portion of our production which can be actually transported to the theatre of war can be effective.* It does not give us Striking Power to pour our resources into the equipment of an army too unwieldy to transport and to supply — to produce, for example, staggering quantities of secondary equipment, such as short-range pursuit planes that are already jamming our dockheads and piling up in our own fields, or to turn out tanks beyond the ships abuilding. To win swiftly, only one thing counts: *Striking Power that can be brought to bear directly upon the enemy.*

There is only one way in which we can achieve this. There must be between our forces a triple partnership in actual fact, a partnership free from prejudice or jealousy. At present, each of our three forces strives to outdo the other in speed and in the volume of its requirements, as if the fate of the nation depended upon the simultaneous production of the full strength of each. The conflict in priorities and in purpose is correspondingly intense. There are not three inexhaustible reservoirs from which to draw. There is only one, and that is by no means bottomless.

The solution lies in a policy which recognizes that priority belongs solely to that *combination* of actual Striking

Power that can be brought to bear against the enemy. All the evidence leads to this final conclusion: —

A policy of intimate coöperation between Army, Navy, and Air Corps having as its objective the soonest possible destruction of enemy citadels by our new Striking Power in the air.

At present, there is critical confusion and discord even in the air program itself. The fact that we have a big bomber program at all, a program already in operation, is due to a crusade carried on by the Assistant Secretary of War for Air, appointed by the President about a year ago. The Assistant Secretary and his associates in the Army Air Corps have been disbelieved, impeded, contradicted, and have only succeeded because of the direct support of the President.

To make the effort succeed, all hands are required — every resource of daring, of experience, of executive power, of vision. We have no time for ‘experts’ who argue, without the facts, that Air Power always has been and always will be indecisive. Until recently, these people were proving that battleships were immune to air attack; and even after the sinking of \$200,000,000 of battleships at a loss of only \$5,000,000 of planes, they insist that Air Power is just an important auxiliary. Against them are ranged aviation extremists who talk and write as if battleships and tanks and troops should be scrapped, and Air Power sustained, like some hydroponic plant, without visible means of support. None of this makes for swift victory.

The things that count in this war are the long-range bombers, the heavy bombs, the bases, the ships and engines and spares that comprise final Striking Power. If we pursue any other policy, if we waste vital time and materials upon the production of weapons that chain us to the past, the war can only end when the man-power and the treasure of the whole world have been devoured by battle and by disease.

MR. CALHOUN AT APPOMATTOX

BY ROBERT RICHARDS

I

THIS is the story of General James Longstreet at Petersburg, near Appomattox, when he rolled over in his bed and found a civilian in his room; an old man with a string tie and an odd-shaped collar.

Josiah Sykes, who was aide to Longstreet, has told it many times and it may be you have heard, yet refused to believe. It may be that you are among the stubborn ones, but you must remember that Josiah was a Baptist and he never missed a Sunday's meeting — would a man like that be lying?

Longstreet said: 'Hell, you look like John C. Calhoun.'

The stranger replied: 'I am Calhoun.'

It was the morning after the death of A. P. Hill, and Longstreet was in a bitter mood. All night he had cursed the impulse which sent gallant Hill against the skirmishers' guns. There was never a soldier in the Army of Northern Virginia, or in the Army of Tennessee for that matter, with franker tongue than Longstreet. 'Get out of here,' he said. 'Get out before I have you shot as a spy.'

John C. Calhoun, if it were he, stood unsmiling. 'How can you shoot me if I am dead?' he asked. 'How can you stand me before a firing squad, or dangle me from the limb of a tree?'

Most men would have raced from the room, or shouted for aid, but not James Longstreet. He dropped his feet to the floor, raised his thickset body, and waited a minute before he pulled on his pants.

'I have come to save you from yourself,' said Calhoun.

Longstreet leaped to the chair, punched the stranger's body with his forefinger and felt the tip of his nail reach wood. There he stood with one hand sunk through what had appeared to be solid flesh: 'By God, you are John C. Calhoun!'

'Of course, I am.'

'Then get out of my room.'

'Get out?'

'I have no need of politicians.'

James Longstreet meant what he said. He knew the whole thing was over now. He knew the war that had brought him hurrying from Albuquerque through Texas to Richmond was at its close. He had been a major in the paymaster department before the war. It had been easy living; not high living, but easy. The sport was good, the food was good, and a man could relax in the shade. In the beginning, Longstreet had expected the politicians to forestall the war. They had done it before, but after Mr. Henry Clay died something slipped, someone got the wires crossed. Then there was the eternal problem of Jefferson Davis — that damned Mr. President Davis. Longstreet was sick of politicians. 'It's too late to help me, Mr. Calhoun,' he said. 'Why didn't you come sooner?'

'It took me a long time to discover you are from South Carolina,' said Calhoun. 'I never saw a Carolina man before who always stayed out of his state.'

'I've been busy,' said General Longstreet.

'Busy, hell,' said John C. Calhoun, and it was a rare thing for him to swear. 'No man ought to be too busy to visit South Carolina. I almost passed over you, young man. I said, "Haven't we any South Carolina men left in this war?" Someone told me, "Yes, there's Longstreet, Mr. Calhoun. He's not doing so well, but there's General Longstreet from South Carolina."' "

'Who said that?' asked James Longstreet, scowling. 'I'm doing all right.'

'You'll do better now,' said Calhoun. 'With me about, you'll do fine.'

Longstreet was a stubborn man. 'I'll not have a politician littering up my camp,' he said. 'You get out of here. I remember you, Mr. Calhoun. You started this thing, you got it rolling downhill like rain off a rock. I remember when everything was quiet, when folks had settled back to their ploughing, you could always get them riled again with your speeches — with your chatter.'

'I could make a good speech,' said John C. Calhoun.

'You started a good war, that's what you did,' said Longstreet. 'You started it, now you get out of here and let me finish it.'

'If I left you now, you would never outlive this fight,' said John Calhoun. 'You better think about that, James Longstreet. You need me to look after you. Don't you be bullheaded, like Henry Clay.'

'I've gone this far on my own, I'll go the rest of the way,' said Longstreet.

'Don't be a fool.'

'I'm not a fool, I'm a soldier. I don't need you.'

John Calhoun smiled and rubbed a hand against his chin. 'There never was and never will be a man from South Carolina who doesn't need John C. Calhoun.'

'Applesauce,' said Longstreet.

'Applesauce, is it? What about you in the Wilderness?'

'Well, what about me?' asked the general.

'Getting shot in the neck like that — shot by your own men, too. That would not have happened if I had been there; I would have kept you out of harm's way, General Longstreet.'

'Listen, don't you try to blame that on me,' said Longstreet. 'Can I help it if Mahone's men lost their heads — can I help it if they mistook me for Yankee cavalry?'

'Just the same, it should not have happened and would not have happened if I had been there.'

Longstreet sighed, rubbed the fresh scar on his neck. He remembered the shock when Mahone's men fired. Micah Jenkins had been beside him, had gone down too. Micah had died in a few hours, but not James Longstreet. They carried him out on a stretcher. They carried him out with his hat over his face.

The soldiers cried: 'He is dead and they were telling us he is only wounded.'

Longstreet had jerked the hat from his face to let them know he was yet alive. They fought better then. They pushed ahead and gave the Yankees hell.

'Do you want to live?' asked John Calhoun.

That was a foolish question for one so wise as the great Calhoun. Did Longstreet wish to live? The vigor of his face, the very wildness of his beard, the solid set of his shoulders, and his lusty manner of eating answered that. No man enjoyed life more than James Longstreet, no man had more vitality, or longed less for death. 'Of course, I want to live,' he answered.

'Then I'll ride with you today.'

'Ride with me?'

'Of course,' said Calhoun.

Longstreet chuckled: 'You couldn't keep up with me — not you.'

Josiah Sykes always said, even after Longstreet warned him, that he never quite saw Mr. Calhoun, but he knew the

great man must have put on his hat because he heard the sound as it moved through the air. Josiah had entered the room to tell Longstreet his mount stood waiting, and he said the general walked about in circles, shaking his head.

II

They galloped along behind the front, Josiah told me, and you could see the grass trampled near Longstreet's horse as Mr. Calhoun picked his way. Later Longstreet told Josiah the great man was riding a gaunt mare with ribs which nearly broke through the skin. 'It looked like he got that horse to match himself, like a man might buy a hat to meet his boots,' Longstreet said.

Josiah Sykes told how they rode along without talking, and all at once there was a broken fence lying across the field, part of it destroyed by shellfire. A horseman had his choice of circling around the rails, if he was patient, or jumping across, if he would not wait. It was not a wide jump, or yet a dangerous one, but it was too much to expect of war-starved horses. 'Let's take it,' ordered Longstreet.

He landed in the field on the back of his neck. He landed with the seat of his pants scooting across the rocky topsoil. Josiah said General Longstreet sat there for a moment, scowling. 'Is this the kind of protection I get?' he asked. 'I thought you were trying to help me out.'

'That'll teach you to leave me,' said John Calhoun, but he was a long time reaching them again because he had to circle the fence; his nag refused to take the jump.

Josiah told me the great man's voice sounded like the wind, only there was no wind. Josiah said the horses lifted their ears, dropped their heads, and shivered from breast strap to bellyband.

Longstreet returned to the saddle. They rode farther from the front, picking their route with care; here and there a soldier would recognize the general and

salute with upraised musket. 'I don't need any aid, Mr. Calhoun, as long as these men are left alive,' said James Longstreet.

'You will — wait and see,' replied John Calhoun.

A rabbit broke across the trail, a lean but happy cottontail, one of the few to survive in battle-scalped Virginia. It was a long-legged creature, and when Longstreet saw it bouncing through the weeds he recalled the sight of rabbit in a steaming dish and he hankered for the odor of long-eared stew. 'I have him,' he cried, pulling his pistol.

One bullet passed beneath the quarry, leaving its mark in the earth; another clipped fur from its tail, but the rabbit sped on into deeper brush. Josiah Sykes said General Longstreet pulled in his mount and almost wept. 'See here, if you're my guardian angel, Mr. Calhoun,' he said, 'why, in God's name, didn't you make the bullet hit that rabbit? You knew I could use that meat.'

'I'm not here to fatten you, General Longstreet,' said Calhoun, if it was Calhoun, and not the wind. 'I'm here to keep you alive.'

Josiah Sykes said it went that way for the better part of a day and a night and there were times when he thought James Longstreet would take his pistol by the barrel and hammer himself to death — he was that upset. Once Mr. Calhoun got real nasty and asked, 'Why did you waste so much time up there at Gettysburg? Why didn't you come to the support of Lee?'

'Listen, I was born in South Carolina, but I was raised in Georgia and Alabama, Mr. Calhoun,' said Longstreet. 'You leave me alone. You started this whole business, you got us into this mess — now you get out of here and quit pestering me.'

'I'm going to save your life,' answered John C. Calhoun.

For six days and six nights, Josiah said, General Longstreet went riding with Mr. Calhoun at his side. Bullets

came and bullets went, but none of them touched the bearded giant. Once a Minié ball flipped hair from the tail of the general's horse, and another raised dust near his boot, but no missile kept Longstreet from his duty of protecting the Confederate rear. General Robert E. Lee had said to him, 'General, why do you keep staring over your shoulder?'

Longstreet had grinned, not knowing how to reply. He could not tell the old man that it was not the wind but John C. Calhoun who whispered at his rear.

'Six days have passed and I have not needed you,' Longstreet told Calhoun. 'Why don't you leave me and pester someone else? Why don't you guard R. E. Lee?'

But John Calhoun shook his head. 'He's not from South Carolina.'

'Six days and six nights — I have not needed you.'

'The time will come, you wait and see.'

Surrender was inevitable; Longstreet had known that for some time, although when they had asked him to tell General Lee, he had pointed out that the Articles of War were definite in their provision that officers or soldiers who asked commanding officers to surrender should be executed. He had said: 'If General Lee doesn't know when to surrender until I tell him, he will never know.'

Of course, Lee found it out for himself soon enough; he went riding off in a fine uniform with sword and sash. His belt was embroidered and his spurs were gold, but his eyes were lead and his face was pale.

General Longstreet had said to John Calhoun: 'It is all over now. Why don't you leave me? Why must you remain to see the finish? Hell, you were one of those who started all this. Get out of here and leave us to our suffering.'

'Not yet,' said Calhoun, if it was Calhoun and not the wind. 'It's not over yet. You're not the best man South Carolina ever saw, James Longstreet, not by a long shot, but you'll come in

handy to the South when this is finished. It'll have need of a hardheaded man like you.'

Then a courier brought the news — the thing they had known was bound to come. Lee was signing away the war to Grant. Even now he was seated in the McLean house at Appomattox with the blue uniforms around him. 'Well, it's official now,' said Longstreet. 'He said he would do it and he's done it — I think I'll go and take a look.'

'You keep away from Appomattox,' said Calhoun. 'What business have you there, Longstreet? Lee gave you the rear of this army to protect. You stay here and obey his orders, or you'll get into trouble.'

Josiah Sykes always said it was plain to see that John C. Calhoun did not understand Old Pete. If he had asked some of the soldiers, one or two of those who had stood in the Wilderness, they could have told him more about it.

'Hell, Mr. Calhoun, the war is ended now,' said Longstreet. 'You pulled me through alive — your mission is ended. Now get away from me.'

'I'll ride to Appomattox,' said John C. Calhoun. 'I'll keep an eye on you.'

III

Josiah maintained Mr. Calhoun had something to do with the manner of the horses' running. He said no normal mounts, even with good fodder inside their bellies, could have matched the speed Longstreet's party made in reaching the McLean house. There were Union saddles stacked around the steps, and there were Union boots trampling the grass.

Calhoun forced General Longstreet behind a bush near the house to keep him out of sight of the soldiers, Josiah told me. Even today there are many folk who don't believe he was there at all. I expect most people will come right out and call you a liar when you tell them this story, but that's because they

just don't know. Josiah Sykes was there, standing next to his general, both having dismounted, and he saw Robert E. Lee come out the door and walk silently to his horse.

Before Lee left they had seen him signing the papers, resting one elbow on the table. They had seen his gray head bowed over the pen, they had heard the blunt kindnesses of U. S. Grant.

'I'm glad you're here, Mr. Calhoun,' said Longstreet. 'I'm glad you rode with me after all. You ought to have a seat at the finish — you and the rest of the hotheads. There's your handiwork, that's Lee walking there. You know Robert E. Lee of Virginia?'

'It's a great pity, sir,' replied John C. Calhoun, shaking his head. 'It's a pity he isn't from South Carolina.'

'To hell with South Carolina,' said James Longstreet. He stood at his full height, stretching his shoulders, and Josiah tried to move nearer to him, fearful of what might happen. 'Now that it's over, Mr. Calhoun, now that it's finished, why don't you leave me?'

But if Longstreet was stubborn, so was John Calhoun. 'I'll not leave you yet,' he said. 'You'll need me soon — wait and see.'

'I don't need anyone now,' said Longstreet. 'I'm through with this war. There's only one thing left to do — I'll return tonight and take that table from McLean's house. I'll take it out and burn it for the shame it brought to Lee.'

'You forget about that table,' shouted Calhoun. 'A grown man like you can't go getting excited over a table. You keep your hands in your pockets, James Longstreet.'

'Why? Why should I forget the table?'

Before the words had left his lips, Longstreet knew the answer. Josiah said you could stare through the window and see the men inside. You could hear their laughter and the noise of hands slapped against backs. A runt of a man, a tiny fellow with a close-clipped head, reached into his pocket and pulled forth

a twenty-dollar gold piece. 'For this table,' he told McLean, the owner of the house, who still remained in the room.

'See, now, you forget that table,' said Calhoun. Josiah Sykes said the great man's voice was shrill, as if he was excited, as if he had waited a long time for this.

'It's that Sheridan!' General Longstreet reached for his pistol. He would show this upstart a thing or two, by God. First he pulled that raw stuff in the Valley, now he was buying the table right out from under General Lee — buying the wood that saw the Confederacy die. 'I'll teach him manners fast enough. I'll put a bullet through his collar.'

John C. Calhoun grabbed the general's shooting arm. Josiah said you could see the hand jerked down and held to Longstreet's side. 'Don't be a fool,' said Calhoun. 'Don't lose your head over a silly table. You know what they'll do to you, James Longstreet, if you shoot Sheridan? They'll march you into Washington in irons, that's what they'll do. They'll toss you into the hulk of a rotten ship most likely, and they'll let some of those Yankee devils spit in your face and kick your shins. Then when you kick back they'll knock you down into the Washington mud, that's what they'll do. Finally they'll hang you, Longstreet — with torchlights, cheering, and lots of bad whiskey.'

'You stay out of this, you leave me alone,' said Longstreet.

Josiah Sykes said it was a lucky thing that General Longstreet could not always see John C. Calhoun, because the general might have taken Mr. Calhoun by the neck then and there, ghost or no ghost, and strangled him where he stood. Josiah said Longstreet was so angry his thick hands trembled and he could not speak for gasping.

Phil Sheridan dropped his gold on the table and McLean reached forth to pick it up. 'It's not for me, it's for George Custer's wife,' said Sheridan. 'She'll like it, too.'

'For Custer's wife? That's a hell of a thing,' said Longstreet. The general knew Custer well. They had clashed not four hours before when the boy commander had galloped up beneath a flag of truce. 'Well, it's over,' Custer had cried. 'I demand your surrender in the name of General Sheridan.' If it had not been for Calhoun, Longstreet would have split his skull.

'A fine thing,' Longstreet howled. 'Giving that table to that popinjay!'

George Armstrong Custer, he of the flowing hair, tilted the table on his shoulder, walked out the door. There was a laugh on Custer's lips, there was a twinkle in Custer's eyes. 'Here's an end to rebellion,' he cried.

Josiah always maintained that if it had been left up to Longstreet he would have chopped George Custer down then and there. He would have knocked the smiling officer from beneath the table and run him through with his saber, but once again John C. Calhoun held to him, saying, 'Keep your head, general. My God, don't lose yourself over a table!'

James Longstreet again grew so angry he could not open his lips. The veins in his forehead swelled to the bursting point, and his belly heaved until the belt around it threatened to snap. He leaned forward to curse his enemies but Mr. Calhoun clamped an invisible hand across his mouth.

Josiah said if Phil Sheridan had seen them there would have been hell to pay because Sheridan was a fighting man. He would have come at Old Pete and Old Pete would have chosen him and the clawing would have been terrific. Josiah always said, however, that he believed Custer caught sight of Longstreet, heard some of the things he was saying. Josiah said Custer covered the side of his head with a portion of the table and almost broke into a run — he was in that much of a hurry.

John C. Calhoun removed his hand from Longstreet's mouth after Custer was out of sight. He turned Old Pete completely free when the last Union man was well over the hill. 'See, you needed me all right,' he said. 'Damned if I ever saw any man go so haywire over a table. If I had turned you loose, James Longstreet, you would have slain either Custer or Sheridan, or both, or they would have killed you. In any case you would not have survived this war.'

Likely as not he was right, said Josiah Sykes, who ought to know.

'You leave me be,' answered Longstreet.

'You have more things ahead of you now than fighting over a table,' said John Calhoun. 'You don't see me losing my head like that, do you?'

'Just the same, it's a painful thing to think of a Yankee woman using that table,' said Longstreet. 'Like as not she'll keep it polished, and like as not she'll serve tea on it. Folks will sit about it, Mr. Calhoun, and laugh about us, laugh about the Confederacy, laugh about General Lee.'

'Do you reckon they'll laugh about South Carolina?'

Old Pete stared at Calhoun, and Josiah said the general almost laughed aloud himself. 'Of course, they'll laugh about South Carolina!'

John C. Calhoun reached over and lifted a knife from James Longstreet's pocket. 'I'll be leaving now, you can go the rest of the way alone,' he said. 'You'll be needing brains, not a blade, from here on out.'

'Where you going with my knife, Mr. Calhoun?' demanded Longstreet.

Josiah could not see him, but he knew the great man must have smiled. 'Hell, Pete, one of these nights I'll put some nicks in that table,' said the great Calhoun.

If it was Calhoun, and not the wind.

FLIGHT TO ARRAS. III

BY ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

(Translated by Lewis Galantière)

[In this true story of the French Air Force in May 1940, Captain Saint-Exupéry describes the experiences of his own decimated *escadrille* (six planes out of twenty-three survive), and more particularly what is happening to his plane, Dutertre his observer, his gunner, and himself on a dangerous sortie over Arras. Here in prose of epic quality is the story of man's courage in the face of defeat. The chapters describing the take-off and the chaos within the French lines appeared in the *Atlantic* for January and February. — THE EDITOR]

XIX

'172°.'

'Right! 172°.'

Call it one seventy-two. Epitaph: 'Maintained his course accurately on 172°.' How long will this crazy challenge go on? I am flying now at two thousand three hundred feet beneath a ceiling of heavy clouds. If I were to rise a mere hundred feet Dutertre would be blind. Thus we are forced to remain visible to the anti-aircraft batteries and play the part of an archer's target for the Germans. Two thousand feet is a forbidden altitude. Your machine serves as a mark for the whole plain. You drain the cannonade of a whole army. You are within range of every calibre. You dwell an eternity in the field of fire of each successive weapon. You are not shot at with cannon but beaten with a stick. It is as if a thousand sticks were used to bring down a single walnut.

I had given a bit of thought to this problem. There is no question of a parachute. When the stricken plane dives to the ground the opening of the escape hatch takes more seconds than the dive of the plane allows. Opening the hatch involves seven turns of a crank that sticks. Besides, at full speed the hatch warps and refuses to slide.

That's that. The medicine had to be

swallowed some day. I always knew it. Meanwhile, the formula is not complicated: stick to 172°.

'One seventy-four.'

'Right! One seventy-four.'

Call it one seventy-four. Must change that epitaph.

'Captain, they are beginning to fire.'

I glanced at the altimeter: two thousand one hundred and fifty feet. Clouds at two thousand three hundred. Well. Nothing to be done about it. What astonishes me is that beneath my cloud bank the world is not black, as I had thought it would be. It is blue. Marvelously blue. Twilight has come, and all the plain is blue.

'One sixty-eight.'

'Right! One sixty-eight.'

Call it one sixty-eight. Interesting, that the road to eternity should be zig-zag. And so peaceful! The earth here looks like an orchard. A moment ago it seemed to me skeletal, inhumanly desiccated. But I am flying low in a sort of intimacy with it. There are trees, some standing isolated, others in clusters. You meet them. And green fields. And houses with red tile roofs.

'One seventy-five.'

My epitaph has lost a good deal of its laconic dignity: 'Maintained his course

on 172°, 174°, 168°, 175°. . . . I shall seem a very versatile fellow. What's that? Engine coughing? Growing cold. I shut the ventilators of the hood. Good. Time to change over to the reserve tanks. I pull the lever. Have I forgotten anything? I glance at the oil gauge. Everything shipshape.

'Beginning to get a bit nasty, Captain.'

Beginning to get nasty. And yet I cannot help being astonished by the blue of the evening. It is so extraordinary. The color is so deep. And those fruit trees, plum trees, perhaps, flowing by. I am part of the countryside now. I am a marauder who has jumped over the wall. I am running through the wet alfalfa, stealing plums. This is an odd war. A war nostalgic and beautifully blue. I got lost somehow, and strayed into this strange country in my old age. . . .

'Zigzag, Captain!'

Here is a new game. You kick the rudder bar with your right foot and then your left, and the anti-aircraft battery can't touch you. When, as a child, I fell down I used to bruise myself and raise swellings. I am sure my nurse used to cure me with compresses of arnica. I am going to need arnica awfully, I think.

Forward of my plane I saw suddenly three lance-strokes aimed at my machine. Three long brilliant vertical twigs. The paths of tracer bullets fired from a small-calibre gun. They were golden. Suddenly in the blue of the evening I had seen the spurting glow of a three-branched candlestick.

'Captain! Firing very fast to port. Hard down!'

I kicked my rudder.

'Getting worse!'

Worse?

Yes, it is getting worse; but I feel none of those things I thought I should feel when facing the claws of these shooting stars.

I am in a country that moves my heart. Day is dying. On the left I see

great slabs of light among the showers. They are like panes in a cathedral window. Almost within reach, I can all but handle the good things of the earth. There are those plum trees with their plums. There is that earth-smelling earth. It must be wonderful to tramp over damp earth.

'Arras!'

Yes. Very far ahead. But Arras is not a town. Arras thus far is no more than a red plume against a blue background of night. Against a background of storm. For unmistakably, forward on the left, an awful squall is collecting. Twilight alone would not explain this half-light. It wants blocks of clouds to filter a glow so sombre. The flame of Arras is bigger now. You wouldn't call it the flame of a conflagration. A conflagration spreads like a chancre surrounded by no more than a narrow edge of living flesh. That red plume permanently alight is the gleam of a lamp that might be smoking a bit. It is a flame without flicker, sure to last, well fed with oil. I can feel it moulded and kneaded out of a compact substance, something almost solid that the wind stirs from time to time and bends as it bends a tree. That's it: a tree. Arras is caught up in the mesh of roots of this tree. And all the pith of Arras, all the substance of Arras, all the treasures of Arras leap, now become sap, to nourish this tree.

I can see that occasionally top-heavy flame lose its equilibrium to right or left, belch forth an even blacker cloud of smoke, and then collect itself again. But I am still unable to make out the town.

The whole war is summed up in that glow. Dutertre says that it is getting worse. Perched up forward, he can see better than I can. Nevertheless, I am astonished by a sort of indulgence shown us: this venomous plain sends forth few stars.

'Captain! Captain! I've never seen anything like it!'

Nor have I.

Where now is my vulnerability? Unknown to myself, I had been hoping. . . .

XX

Despite my lack of altitude, I had been hoping. Despite the tank parks, despite the flame over Arras. Desperately, I had been hoping.

I had been using every trick in my bag. When Dutertre said to me, 'It's getting worse,' I used even that threat as a source of hope. We were at war: necessarily, then, there had to be evidence of war. The evidence was no more than a few streaks of light. 'Is this your terrible danger of death over Arras? Don't make me laugh!'

I myself could not but be deceived — since this whole world was snug and verdant, since the wet slate and tile shone so cordially, since from minute to minute nothing changed or promised to change. Since we three, Dutertre, the gunner, and I, were men walking across fields, sauntering idly home without so much as the need to raise our collars, so little was it raining. Since here at the heart of the German zone nothing stood forth that was really worth telling about; whence it must follow that, farther on, the war need not of necessity be different from this. Since it seemed that the enemy had scattered and melted into the wide and rural plain, standing perhaps at the rate of one soldier to a house, one soldier to a tree, one of whom, remembering now and then the war, would fire. The order had been drummed into the fellow's ears: 'Fire on all enemy planes.' But he had been daydreaming, and the order had been dimmed by the dream. He let fly his three rounds without much expectation of results. Thus at dusk I used to shoot ducks that meant very little to me if the evening invited my soul. I would fire while talking about something else. It hardly disturbed the ducks.

How vulnerable I was! Yet it seemed to me that my very vulnerability was a

trap, a means of cajoling the enemy: 'Why fire? Your friends are sure to bring me down a little farther on.' And they would shrug their shoulders: 'Go break your neck somewhere else.' They were leaving the chore to the next battery — because they were anxious not to miss their turn at the soup, were finishing their funny story, or were simply enjoying the evening breeze. I was taking advantage of their negligence, and I was saved by the seeming coincidence that all of them at once appeared to be weary of war. And why not? Already I was thinking vaguely that from soldier to soldier, squad to squad, village to village, I should get through this sortie. After all, what were we but a passing plane in the evening sky? Not enough to make a man raise his eyes.

Of course I hoped to get back. But I could feel at the same time that something was in the air. You are sentenced; a penalty hangs over you; but the gaol in which you are locked up continues silent. You cling to that silence. Every second that drops is like the one that went before. There is no reason why the second about to drop should change the world. Such a task is too heavy for a single second. Each second that follows safeguards your silence. Already this silence seems perpetual.

But the step of him who must come sounds in the corridor.

Something in this countryside suddenly exploded. So a log that seemed burnt out crackles suddenly and shoots forth its sparks. How did it happen that the whole plain started up at the same moment? When spring comes, all the trees at once drop their seed. Why this sudden springtime of arms? Why this luminous flood rising towards us and, of a sudden, universal?

My first feeling was that I had been careless. I had ruined everything. A wink, a single gesture is enough to topple you from the tightrope. A mountain climber coughs, and he releases an ava-

lanche. Once he has released the avalanche, all is over.

We had been swaying heavily through this blue swamp already drowned in night. We had stirred up this silent slime; and now, in tens of thousands, it was sending towards us its golden bubbles. A nation of jugglers had burst into dance. A nation of jugglers was dribbling its projectiles in tens of thousands in our direction. Because they came straight at us, they appeared at first to be motionless. Like colored balls which jugglers seem not so much to fling into the air as to release upwards, they rose in a lingering ascension. I could see those tears of light flowing towards me through a silence as of oil. That silence in which jugglers perform.

Each burst of a machine gun or a rapid-fire cannon shot forth hundreds of these phosphorescent bullets that followed one another like the beads of a rosary. A thousand elastic rosaries strung themselves out towards the plane, drew themselves out to the breaking point, and burst at our height. When, missing us, the string went off at a tangent, its speed was dizzying. The bullets were transformed into lightning. And I flew drowned in a crop of trajectories as golden as stalks of wheat. I flew at the centre of a thicket of lance-strokes. I flew threatened by a vast and dizzying flutter of knitting needles. All the plain was now bound to me, woven and wound round me, a coruscating web of golden wire.

I leaned towards the earth and saw those storied levels of luminous bubbles rising with the tardy movement of veils of fog. I saw as I stared the slow vortex of seed, swirling like the husk of threshed grain. And when I raised my head I saw on the horizon those stacks of lances. Guns firing? Not at all! I am attacked by cold steel. These are swords of light. I feel . . . certainly not in danger! Dazzled I am by the luxury that envelops me.

What's that!

I was jolted nearly a foot out of my seat. The plane has been rammed hard, I thought. It has burst, been ground to bits. . . . But it hasn't; it hasn't. . . . I can still feel it responsive to the controls. This was but the first blow of a deluge of blows. Yet there was no sign of explosion below. The smoke of the heavy guns had probably blended into the dark ground.

I raised my head and stared. What I saw was without appeal.

XXI

I had been looking on at a carnival of light. The ceiling had risen little by little and I had been unaware of an intervening space between the clouds and me. I had been zigzagging along a line of flight dotted by ground batteries. Their tracer bullets had been spraying the air with wheat-colored shafts of light. I had forgotten that at the top of their flight the shells of those batteries must burst. And now, raising my head, I saw around and before me those rivets of smoke and steel driven into the sky in the pattern of towering pyramids.

I was quite aware that those rivets were no sooner driven than all danger went out of them, that each of those puffs possessed the power of life and death only for a fraction of a second. But so sudden and simultaneous was their appearance that the image flashed into my mind of conspirators intent upon my death. Abruptly their purpose was revealed to me, and I felt on the nape of my neck the weight of an inescapable reprobation.

Muffled as those explosions reached me, their sound covered by the roar of my engines, I had the illusion of an extraordinary silence. Those vast packets of smoke and steel, moving soundlessly upward and behind me with the lingering flow of icebergs, persuaded me that, seen in their perspective, I must be virtually motionless. I was motionless in the dock before an immense assizes. The

judges were deliberating my fate, and there was nothing I could plead. Once again the timelessness of suspense seized me. I thought, — I was still able to think, — ‘They are aiming too high,’ and I looked up in time to see straight overhead, swinging away from me as if with reluctance, a swarm of black flakes that glided like eagles. Those eagles had given me up. I was not to be their prey. But even so, what hope was there for me?

The batteries that continued to miss me continued also to readjust their aim. New walls of smoke and steel continued to be built up round me as I flew. The ground-fire was not seeking me out, it was closing me in.

‘Dutertre! How much more of this is there?’

‘Stick it out three minutes, Captain. Looks bad, though.’

‘Think we’ll get through?’

‘Not on your life!’

There never was such muck as this murky smoke, this mess as grimy as a heap of filthy rags. The plain was blue. Immensely blue. Deep-sea blue.

What was a man’s life worth between this blue plain and this foul sky? Ten seconds, perhaps; or twenty. The shock of the exploding shells set all the sky shuddering. When a shell burst very near, the explosion rumbled along the plane like rock dropping through a chute. And when for a moment the roar stopped, the plane rang with a sound that was almost musical. Like a sigh, almost; and the sigh told us that the plane had been missed. Those bursts were like the thunder: the closer they came, the simpler they were. A rumble meant distance, a clean *bang!* meant that we had been squarely hit by a shell fragment. The tiger does not do a messy job on the ox it brings down. The tiger sets its claws into the ox without skidding. It takes possession of the ox. Each square hit by a fragment of shell sank into the hull of the plane like a claw into living flesh.

‘Anybody hurt?’

‘Not I!’

‘Gunner! You all right?’

‘O.K., sir!’

Somehow those explosions, though I find I must mention them, did not really count. They drummed upon the hull of the plane as upon a drum. They pierced my fuel tanks. They might as easily have drummed upon our bellies, pierced them instead. What is the belly but a kind of drum? But who cares what happens to his body? Extraordinary, how little the body matters.

I used to wonder as I was dressing for a sortie what a man’s last moments were like. And each time, life would give the lie to the ghosts I evoked. Here I was, now, naked and running the gauntlet, unable so much as to guard my head by arm or shoulder from the crazy blows raining down upon me. I had always assumed that the ordeal, when it came, would be an ordeal that concerned my flesh. My flesh alone, I assumed, would be subjected to the ordeal. It was unavoidable that in thinking of these things I should adopt the point of view of my body. Like all men, I had given it a good deal of time. I had dressed it, bathed it, fed it, quenched its thirst. I had identified myself with this domesticated animal. I had taken it to the tailor, the surgeon, the barber. I had been unhappy with it, cried out in pain with it, loved with it. I had said of it, ‘This is me.’ And now of a sudden my illusion vanished. What was my body to me? A kind of flunky in my service. Let but my anger wax hot, my love grow exalted, my hatred collect in me, and that boasted solidarity between me and my body was gone.

Your son is in a burning house. Nobody can hold you back. You may burn up; but do you think of that? You are ready to bequeath the rags of your body to any man who will take them. You discover that what you set so much store by is trash. You would sell your hand, if

need be, to give a hand to a friend. It is in your act that you exist, not in your body. Your act is yourself, and there is no other you. Your body belongs to you: it is not you. Are you about to strike an enemy? No threat of bodily harm can hold you back. You? It is the death of your enemy that is you. You? It is the rescue of your child that is you. In that moment you exchange yourself against something else; and you have no feeling that you lost by the exchange. Your members? Tools. A tool snaps in your hand: how important is that tool? You exchange yourself against the death of your enemy, the rescue of your child, the recovery of your patient, the perfection of your theorem. Here is a pilot of my Group wounded and dying. A true citation in general orders would read: 'Called out to his observer, "They've got me! Beat it! And for God's sake don't lose those notes!"' What matters is the notes, the child, the patient, the theorem. Your true significance becomes dazzlingly evident. Your true name is duty, hatred, love, child, theorem. There is no other you than this.

The flames of the house, of the diving plane, strip away the flesh; but they strip away the worship of the flesh too. Man ceases to be concerned with himself: he recognizes of a sudden what he forms part of. If he should die, he would not be cutting himself off from his kind, but making himself one with them. He would not be losing himself, but finding himself. This that I affirm is not the wishful thinking of a moralist. It is an everyday fact. It is a commonplace truth. But a fact and a truth hidden under the veneer of our everyday illusion. Dressing and fretting over the fate that might befall my body, it was impossible for me to see that I was fretting over something absurd. But in the instant when you are giving up your body, you learn to your amazement — all men always learn to their amazement — how little store you set by your body. It would be foolish to deny that during

all those years of my life when nothing insistent was prompting me, when the meaning of my existence was not at stake, it was impossible for me to conceive that anything might be half so important as my body. But here in this plane I say to my body (in effect), 'One way and another, I have dragged you through life to this point; and here I discover that you are of no importance.'

Man does not die. Man imagines that it is death he fears; but what he fears is the unforeseen, the explosion. What man fears is himself, not death. There is no death when you meet death. When the body sinks into death, the essence of man is revealed. Man is a knot, a web, a mesh into which relationships are tied. Only those relationships matter. The body is an old creak that nobody will miss. I have never known a man to think of himself when dying. Never.

'Captain!'

'What's up?'

'Getting hot!'

'Gunner!'

'Er . . . yes, sir.'

'What —'

My question vanished in the shock of another explosion.

'Dutertre!'

'Captain?'

'Hurt?'

'No.'

'You, gunner!'

'Yes, sir.'

'I wa —'

I seemed to be running the plane into a bronze wall. A voice in my ear said, 'Boy! oh, boy!' as I looked up to measure the distance to the overhanging clouds. The sharper the angle at which I stared, the more densely the murky tufts seemed to be piled up. Seen straight overhead, the sky was visible between them, they hung curved and scattered, forming a gigantic coronet in the air.

A man's thigh muscles are incredibly powerful. I bore down upon the rudder bar with all my strength and sent the

plane shuddering and skidding at right angles to our line of flight. The coronet swung overhead and slid down on my right. I had got away from one of the batteries and left it firing wasted packets of shell. But before I could bring my other thigh into play the ground battery had set straight what hung askew — the coronet of smoke was back again. Once more I bore down, and again the plane groaned and swayed in this swampy sky. All the weight of my body was on that bar, and the machine had swung, had skidded squarely to starboard. The coronet curved now above me on the left.

Would we last it out? But how could we! Each time that I brought the ship brutally round, the deluge of lance-strokes followed me before I could jerk back again. Each time the coronet was set back into place and the shell bursts shook up the plane anew. And each time, when I looked down, I saw again that same dizzily slow ascension of golden bubbles that seemed to be accurately centred upon my plane. How did it happen that we were still whole? I began to believe in us. 'I am invulnerable, after all,' I said to myself. 'I am winning. From second to second, I am more and more the winner.'

'Anybody hurt yet?'

'Nobody.'

They were unhurt. They were invulnerable. They were victorious. I was the owner of a winning team. And from that moment each explosion seemed to me not to threaten us but to temper us. Each time, for a fraction of a second, it seemed to me that my plane had been blown to bits; but each time it responded anew to the controls and I nursed it along like a coachman pulling hard on the reins. I began to relax, and a wave of jubilation went through me. There was just time enough for me to feel fear as no more than a physical stiffening induced by a loud crash, when instantly after each buffet a wave of relief went through me. I ought to have felt successively the

shock, then the fear, then the relief; but there wasn't time. What I felt was the shock, then instantly the relief. Shock, relief. Fear, the intermediate step, was missing. And during the second that followed the shock I did not live in the expectancy of death in the second to come, but in the conviction of resurrection born of the second just passed. I lived in a sort of slipstream of joy, in the wake of my jubilation. A prodigiously unlooked-for pleasure was flowing through me. It was as if, with each second that passed, life was being granted me anew. As if with each second that passed my life became a thing more vivid to me. I was living. I was alive. I was still alive. I was the source of life itself. I was thrilled through with the intoxication of living. 'The heat of battle' is a familiar phrase; the heat of living is a truer one. 'I wonder,' I said to myself, 'if those Germans below who are firing at us know that they are creating life within us?'

All my tanks had been pierced, both gas and oil. Otherwise we seemed to be sound. Dutertre called out that he was through, and once again I looked up and calculated the distance to the clouds. I raised the nose of the ship, and once again I sent the plane zigzagging as I climbed. Once again I cast a glance earthwards. What I saw I shall not forget. The plane was crackling everywhere with short wicks of spurting flame — the rapid-fire cannon. The colored balls were still floating upward through an immense blue aquarium of air. Arras was glowing dark red like iron on the anvil, a flame fed by subterranean stores, by the sweat of men, the inventions of men, the arts of men, the memories and patrimony of men, all these braided in the ruddy ascension of that single plume that changed them into fire and ash, borne away on the wind.

Already I was flying through the first packets of mist. Golden arrows still rose and pierced the belly of the cloud, and

just as the cloud closed round me I caught through an opening my last glimpse of that scene. For a single instant the flame over Arras rose up glowing in the night like a lamp in the nave of a cathedral. The lamp that was Arras was burning in the service of a cult, but at a price. By tomorrow it would have consumed Arras and itself have been consumed.

'Everything all right, Dutertre?'

'First rate, captain. Two-forty, please. We shan't be able to come down out of this cloud for about twenty minutes. Then I'll pick up a landmark along the Seine somewhere.'

'Everything all right, gunner?'

'Everything fine, sir.'

'Not too hot for you, was it?'

'No, I guess not, sir.'

Hard for him to tell. But he was feeling fine. I thought of Gavaille's gunner. In the days when this was still a very odd war, we used to do long-distance reconnaissance over Germany. There was a night over the Rhine when eighty searchlights picked up Gavaille's plane and built a giant basilica round it. The anti-aircraft began to fire, and suddenly Gavaille heard his gunner talking to himself — for the intercom is hardly a private line. The man was muttering a dialogue of one: 'Think you've been around, do you? I'll tell you something you've never seen!' He was feeling fine, that gunner.

I flew on, drawing deep slow breaths. I filled my lungs to the bottom. It was wonderful to breathe again. There were many things I was going to find out about. First I thought of Alias. No, that's not true. I thought first of my host, my farmer. I still looked forward to asking him how many instruments he thought a pilot had to watch. Sorry, but I am stubborn about some things. One hundred and three. He would never guess. Which reminds me. When your tanks have been pierced, it does no harm to have a look at your gauges. Wonderful tanks! Their rubber coatings had

done their job; automatically, they had contracted and plugged the holes made by bullets and shell splinters. I had a look at my stabilizers too. This cloud we flew in was a storm cloud. It shook us up pretty badly.

'Think we can come down now?'

'Ten minutes more. Better wait another ten minutes.'

Of course I could wait another ten minutes. . . . Yes, I had thought of Alias. Was he still expecting us, I wondered? The other day we had been half an hour late. A half hour is generally longer than you ought to be: it means trouble. I had landed and run to join the Group, who were at table. I had opened the door and fallen into a chair beside Alias. At that moment he had a cluster of spaghetti on his fork and was preparing to tuck it away. He jumped, took a good look at me, and sat perfectly still, the noodles hanging from his fork.

'Well, I . . . Glad to see you,' he said.

And he stuffed the noodles into his mouth.

The major has one serious fault, to my mind. He insists stubbornly on examining his pilots about their sorties. He will examine me. He will sit looking at me with embarrassing patience, waiting for me to spin out my commonplace observations. He will have armed himself with paper and pencil, determined not to lose a single drop of the elixir I shall presumably have brought back.

Intelligence is Dutertre's business, not mine. He is the observer; I am the pilot. From where he sits he can see straight below. He sees lots of things — lorries, barges, tanks, soldiers, cannon, horses, railway stations, trains, station masters. From where I sit I see the world at an angle. I see clouds, sea, rivers, mountains, sun. I see roughly, and get only a general impression.

'Major, you know as well as I do that a pilot . . .'

'Come, come, Saint-Ex! You do see some things, after all.'

I . . . Oh, yes! Flames. Villages burning. Doesn't the major think that interesting?

'Nonsense! The whole country is on fire. What else?'

Why must Alias be so cruel?

XXII

What I bring back from this sortie is not matter for a report. When Alias examines me I shall flunk like a schoolboy standing before all the class at a black-board. I shall seem very unhappy, and yet I shall not be unhappy. Unhappiness is behind me. It fled in that instant when the shell bursts began to drum upon the plane. Had I turned back one second before, I should have missed knowing myself.

I should never have known the flood of affection that at this moment fills my heart. I am going back to my own kind. I am going home. I am like a housewife whose shopping is done and who is on her way home, her mind on the savory dinner with which she is about to delight her family. Her market basket swings on her arm to left and right.

Even in the belly of this cloud I am on my way home from market. The major was right, after all. When he sent us off in a voice that seemed to say, 'And then you take the first turn to the right, where you will see a tobacco shop,' his voice was pitched on the right note. My conscience is at rest. I have the major's matches in my pocket — or more truly, Dutertre has them in his pocket. How Dutertre manages to remember what he saw, I cannot imagine. But that is his business. My mind is on more serious things. We shall land; and if the enemy spare us the nuisance of a sudden rush to still another field, I shall challenge Lacordaire and beat him at chess. He hates to lose. So do I. But I shall win.

Yesterday, be it said without dishonor, Lacordaire got tight. At least, a little tight. He had got tight in order to console himself. Coming in from a sortie, he

had forgotten to release his landing gear and had set the plane down on her belly. Unfortunately, Alias had seen him do it; but he had not said a word. And Lacordaire, a pilot of long experience, had stood by, waiting for Alias to turn upon him. He had stood by hoping that Alias would curse him. A violent tongue-lashing would have done him good. It would have allowed him to explode too. It would have allowed him to get off his chest the rage against himself that was swelling in him. But Alias had merely shaken his head sadly. Alias's mind was on the plane, not on the pilot. To the major, this accident was a kind of anonymous misfortune, a statistical tax levied on the Group. It was the effect of one of those moments of absent-mindedness that attack even the most experienced pilots. It was an injustice, and Lacordaire was its victim. Except this blunder, Lacordaire's professional record was clean. Alias knew this, and all that bothered him was the plane. Automatically, without thinking, he turned to Lacordaire and asked him how bad he thought the damage was. And I could feel Lacordaire's pent-up rage rise a degree at the question. You put your hand cordially on the torturer's shoulder and say to him, 'How badly do you think your victim is suffering?' Truly, the human heart is unfathomable. That friendly hand soliciting the torturer's sympathy exasperates the torturer. He flings a black look at the victim and is sorry he hasn't finished her off.

I am on my way home. Group 2-33 is my home. And I understand my kind. I cannot be mistaken about Lacordaire. Lacordaire cannot be mistaken about me. Nothing is stronger than the community of feeling between us, the feeling that goes through me when I say, 'We of Group 2-33.' The particles, the fragments that we are, collect and possess meaning in the fact of the Group.

Flying in the cloud, I think of Gavaille

and Hochedé. I am stirred by the community of feeling that binds me to them. I wonder about Gavaille. What sort of people does he come of? There is a wonderful earthy substance in Gavaille. A memory sweeps suddenly over me and fills me with warmth. At Orconte, Gavaille too was billeted with a peasant. One day he said to me, 'The farmer's wife killed a pig the other day. She wants us to try her blood-sausage.'

Three of us sat eating the wonderful black and crackling skin — Gavaille, Israel, and I. There was a crock of white wine to wash it down. Gavaille said as we ate, 'I bought this for the farmer's wife, thinking she'd like it. Write something in it for her.' It was a copy of one of my books. I was not in the least embarrassed. I wrote in it with pleasure, to please them both. Gavaille sat scratching his leg. Israel was stuffing his pipe. The farmer's wife seemed pleased to have a book inscribed by an author. The kitchen was redolent of the sausage. I was a little tight, for the white wine was heady.

I did not feel in the least strange, despite the fact of inscribing a book — a thing which in other circumstances has always bothered me. I did not feel at all out of place. Despite the book, I did not think of myself either as an author or as an outsider. I was not an outsider. Israel looked on and smiled pleasantly as I wrote my name. Gavaille went on scratching his leg. And I felt grateful for the way they took it. That book might have made them look upon me as an outsider. Yet it didn't. I was still one of them.

The notion of looking on at life has always been hateful to me. What am I if I am not a participant? In order to be, I must participate. I am fed by the quality that resides in those who participate with me. That quality is something the men of the Group never think of — not out of humility, but because they do not stoop to measure it. Gavaille does not wonder about himself, nor does Israel.

Each of these men is a web woven of his job, his trade, his duty. That smoking sausage, eaten in these circumstances, is woven into that web. The presence of these men is dense, full of meaning, and it warms my heart. I am able to sit with them in silence. To drink my white wine with them. To sign my book without thereby cutting myself off from them. Nothing in the world is strong enough to wreck this fellowship.

I have mentioned before that because I was a writer I might have enjoyed certain advantages, certain liberties in this war. I might for example have been free to leave Group 2-33 the day I no longer approved of what I was ordered to do. But that kind of liberty I reject almost with terror. It is no more than the liberty to be a bystander, which is to say the liberty not to exist. There is no growth except in the acceptance of obligations.

We in France all but died of intelligence unsupported by substance. Gavaille exists. He loves, hates, rejoices, complains. He is shaped and heightened by the strands woven together and constituting his being. And exactly as, sitting with him at table, I took pleasure from the crisp sausage we shared, so I take pleasure from the obligations of the craft that fuse us of the Group into a common being. I love Group 2-33. I do not love it with the love of a spectator looking on at a handsome spectacle. I don't give a button for spectacles. I love Group 2-33 because I am part of it and it is part of me, because it nourishes me and I contribute to nourishing it.

And now, flying home from Arras, I am more than ever interwoven with Group 2-33. I have formed still another tie with it. I have intensified in me that feeling of communion with it that is to be relished and left unspoken. Each of us had risked his life in more or less the same fashion. Israel had disappeared. It seemed pretty certain that in the course of today's outing I too should disappear. What have I earned by this

swing round the sky except a slightly better right to sit down at their table and be silent with them? The right is dearly bought; but it is a dear right. It is the right to be, and thus to escape non-being.

Yet the notion that I shall stammer when, some minutes from now, Alias will put his questions, makes me go red. I shall feel ashamed, I know. The major will think me a little idiotic. The shame that I feel already by anticipation is genuine. Yet . . . Once again I had taken off — this time to Arras — in search of the proof of my good faith. I had risked my flesh in this sortie. I had risked it being pretty sure that I should lose it. I had given everything to the rules of the game in order to turn them somehow into something other than the rules of the game. And this being so, I have won the right to appear sheepish when the major examines me. The right, that is, to participate. To be interwoven with the rest. To commune with them. To give and receive. To be more than myself. To possess this plenitude that swells so powerfully within me. To feel the love that I feel for the Group, a love that is not an impulse from without but is something inward and never to be manifested — except at a farewell dinner. At a farewell dinner you are sure to be a little drunk, and the benevolence born of alcohol is sure to make you lean towards your friends as a tree whose boughs bend with gifts. My love of the Group has no need of definition. It is woven of bonds. It is my substance. I am of the Group, and the Group is of me.

And as I think of the Group, it is impossible for me not to think of Hochedé. Hochedé made a total gift of himself to this war. More, probably, than any of us, Hochedé dwells permanently in that state which I have striven so hard to attain to. Hochedé has arrived at the goal towards which the rest of us tend, the goal I seek to reach.

Hochedé is a former sergeant recently

promoted second lieutenant. I can imagine that his culture is slight. He is unable to shed any light upon himself. But he is constructed, he is complete. The word 'duty' loses all bombast when applied to Hochedé. Any man would be happy to accept his duty as Hochedé does.

When I think of Hochedé, I reproach myself all my petty renunciations, my negligences, my laziness, and my moments of intellectualism, which is to say skepticism. This is not a sign in me of virtue but of intelligent jealousy. I should like to exist as completely as Hochedé does. A tree solidly planted on its roots is a beautiful thing. The permanence of Hochedé is a beautiful thing. Hochedé could never disappoint.

Volunteer? We were all volunteers on all our sorties. For the rest of us, the reason was a vague need to believe in ourselves. By volunteering, we outdid ourselves a little. Hochedé was a volunteer by nature. He was, in essence, this war. The fact was so evident that when a plane was bound to be sacrificed the major thought automatically of Hochedé. 'Look here, Hochedé. . . .' Hochedé was steeped in this war as a monk is steeped in religion. For whom did he fight? For himself, since he was interwoven with the war, with the Group, with France. Hochedé was fused together with a certain substance, and that substance, which was his own significance, had to be saved. At Hochedé's level, life and death are somewhat the same thing. Hochedé was already part of both. Perhaps without realizing it, he hardly feared death. Stick it out; make others stick it out — that was what mattered. For Hochedé, life and death had become reconciled.

I am part of Israel, of Gavaille, of Hochedé, and they are part of me. I am part of Group 2-33, and it of me. I am part of my country, and it of me. My country and I are one. And all the men of Group 2-33 are one with their country.

XXIII

I have changed a good deal. I had been bitter these last days, Major Alias — these last days when the armored invasion was meeting no resistance, when our sacrificial offerings cost the Group seventeen out of twenty-three crews. It had seemed to me that we — that you in particular — were agreeing to play the part of dead men merely because the show called for dead supernumeraries. I had been bitter, Major Alias; and I had been wrong.

You in particular, but the rest of us too, had clung to the letter of a duty whose spirit had ceased to be visible for us. You had driven us intuitively not towards victory, which was impossible, but towards self-fulfillment. You knew as well as we did that the intelligence we brought back would never reach the Staff. But you were salvaging rites whose power none of us could perceive. Each time that you examined us on the lorries, the barges, the railway trains we had spotted, examined us as soberly as if our answers could possibly serve a purpose, you seemed to me revoltingly hypocritical. But you were right, Major Alias.

Until I learned what I learned over Arras, I could feel no responsibility for this stream of refugees over which once more I fly. I can be bound to no men except those to whom I give. I understand no men except those to whom I am bound. I exist only to the degree that I am nourished by the springs at my roots. I am bound to that mob on the highways, and it is bound to me. At three hundred miles an hour and an elevation of six hundred feet, now that I have come down out of the clouds, I have become one with that mob. I, flying in the descending night, am like a shepherd who in a single glance counts and collects and welds his scattered sheep into a flock again. That mob is no longer a mob, it is a people.

We dwell in the rot of defeat, yet I am

filled with a solemn and abiding jubilation, as if I had just come from a sacrament. I am steeped in chaos, yet I have won a victory. Is there a single pilot of the Group who ever flew home without this feeling of victory in his breast? This very day, when Pénicot came in from a morning's low-altitude sortie and was telling me about it, this was how he spoke: —

'Whenever one of their ground batteries seemed to me to be aiming too well for my comfort, I would zoom down just above the ground and make straight for the battery at full speed, and the spray from my guns would blow out their ruddy fire as if it was a candle. Before they knew it, I was on their gun crew, and you would have thought I was a bursting shell. *Bang!* The crew would scatter and flop in every direction. I swear, I felt as if I was scattering ninepins.' And Pénicot, victorious captain, roared with glee, as pleased with himself as Gavaille's gunner when they flew through the vault of the enemy searchlights like a military wedding-party marching under an arch of swords.

'Ninety-four, Captain.'

Dutertre had picked up a landmark along the Seine, and we were down now to four hundred feet. Flowing beneath me at three hundred miles an hour, the earth was drawing great rectangles of wheat and alfalfa, great triangles of forest, across my glass windscreen. Divided by the stem of the plane, the flow of the broken landscape to left and right filled me with a curious satisfaction. The Seine shone below, and when I crossed its winding course at an angle it seemed to speed past and pivot upon itself. The swirl of the river was as lovely in my sight as the curve of a sickle in a field. I felt restored to my element. I was captain of my ship. The fuel tanks were holding out. I should certainly win a drink at poker dice from Pénicot and then beat Lacordaire at chess.

It was impossible for me not to con-

trast in my mind the two worlds of plane and earth. I had led Dutertre and my gunner this day beyond the bourne at which reasonable men would stop. We had seen France in flames. We had seen the sun shining on the sea. We had grown old in the upper altitudes. We had bent our glance upon a distant earth as over the cases of a museum. We had played in the sunlight with the dust of enemy fighter planes. Thereafter we had dropped earthward again and flung ourselves into the holocaust. What we could offer up, we had sacrificed. And in that sacrifice we had learned even more about ourselves than we should have done after ten years in a monastery. We had come forth again after ten years in a monastery.

And in the little time we had taken to wander so far, the caravan of refugees over which we flew had perhaps advanced five hundred yards. In less time than it would take them to lift a motor-car out of a ditch and set it back on the road again, in less time than many a driver would sit drumming impatiently on the wheel as he waited for a stream of traffic to empty itself out of a crossroad, we should be safely back in our haven.

At a single bound we had leaped over the whole defeat. We were above and beyond it, pilgrims stronger than the desert through which they toil because already in their hearts they have reached the holy city that is their destination. This night now falling would park that unhappy people of refugees in its stable of misery. The flock would huddle together for comfort, but to whom, to what would it cry out? Whereas we fly towards comrades and a kind of celebration. A lamplight gleaming from the humblest hut can change the rudest winter night into Christmas Eve. We in this plane are bound for a place where there will be comrades to welcome us. We in this plane are bound for the communion of our daily bread.

Sufficient unto this day is the weariness and the bliss thereof. I shall turn

over to the ground crew my ship made noble by her scars. I shall strip off my cumbrous flying clothes; and as it is now too late to win that drink from Pénicot, I shall go directly to table and dine among my comrades. We are late. Those who are late never return. Late, are they? If late, then too late. Then nothing can be done for them. The night has swung them into eternity.

Yet at the dinner hour, when the Group takes a census of its dead, one thing is done for them: they are made handsomer than was their wont. They are sketched forever in their most luminous smile. But we in this plane are surrendering that privilege. We shall surge up out of nowhere, like demons, like poachers in a wood. The major's hand will stop with his bread half way to his mouth. He will stare at us. Perhaps he will say, 'Oh! . . . Oh, there you are!' The rest will say nothing. They will scarcely throw us a glance.

Men do not really grow old. Men are as pure when you come back to them as when you left them. 'Oh, there you are, you who are of our kind!' The words thought and not spoken, out of delicacy of feeling. We come home from our sortie ready for our silent reward. Its quality is unique, for it is the quality of love. We do not recognize it as love. Love, when ordinarily we think of it, implies a more tumultuous pathos. But this is the veritable love — a web woven of strands in which we are fulfilled.

XXIV

When I got back to my billet I found my farmer at table with his wife and niece.

'Tell me,' I said to him; 'how many instruments do you think a pilot has to look after?'

'How should I know? Not my trade,' he answered. 'Must be some missing, though, to my way of thinking. The ones you win a war with. Have some supper?'

I said I'd had supper at the mess, but already he wasn't listening to me.

'You, our niece, there. Shove along a little. Make room for the captain.'

I was made to sit down between the girl and her aunt. Here was something besides the Group that I formed part of. Through my comrades I was woven into the whole of my country. Love is a seed: it has only to sprout, and its roots spread far and wide.

Silently my farmer broke the bread and handed it round. Unruffled, austere, the cares of his day had clothed him in dignity. Perhaps for the last time at this table, he shared his bread with us as in an act of worship. I sat thinking of the wide fields out of which that substance had come. Tomorrow those fields would be invaded by the enemy. Oh, there would be no tumult of men and clashing arms! The earth is vast. My farmer would see no more of the invasion than a solitary sentinel posted against the wide sky on the edge of the fields. In appearance nothing would have changed; but a single sign is enough to tell man that everything has changed.

The wind running through the field of grain will still resemble a wind running over the sea. But the wind in the grain is a more wonderful sweep, for as it ruffles the tips of the wheat it takes a census of a patrimony. It takes stock of a future. The wind in the grain is the caress to the spouse, it is the hand of peace stroking her hair.

Tomorrow that wheat will have changed. Wheat is something more than carnal fodder. To nourish man is not the same as to fatten cattle. Bread has more than one meaning. We have learned to see in bread a means of communion between men, for men break bread together. We have learned to see in bread the symbol of the dignity of labor, for bread is earned in the sweat of the brow. We have learned to see in bread the essential vessel of compassion, for it is bread that is distributed to the miserable. There is no savor like that of bread

shared between men. And I saw of a sudden that the energy contained in this spiritual food, this bread of the spirit generated by that field of wheat, was in peril. Tomorrow, perhaps, when he broke bread again and sent it round the table, my farmer would not be celebrating the same household rite. Tomorrow, perhaps, his bread would not bring the same glow into these faces round the table. For bread is like the oil of the lamp: its merit is in the light it sheds.

I looked at the beautiful niece beside me and said to myself, 'Bread, in this child, is transmuted into languid grace. It is transmuted into modesty. It is transmuted into gentle silence. And tomorrow, perhaps, this same bread, by virtue of a single gray uniform rising on the edge of that ocean of wheat, though it nourish this same lamp, will perhaps no longer send forth this same glowing light. The power that is in this bread will have gone out of it.'

I had made war this day to preserve the glowing light in that lamp, and not to feed that body. I had made war for the particular radiation into which bread is transmuted in the homes of my countrymen. What moved me so deeply in that pensive little girl was the insubstantial vestment of the spirit. It was the mysterious totality composed by the features of her face. It was the poem on the page, more than the page itself.

The little girl felt that I was looking at her. She raised her eyes to mine. It seemed to me that she smiled at me. Her smile was hardly more than a breath over the face of the waters; but that fugitive gleam was enough. I was moved. I felt, mysteriously present, a soul that belonged in this place and no other. There was a peace here, sensing which I murmured to myself, 'The peace of the kingdom of silence.' That smile was the glow of the shining wheat.

The face of the niece was unruffled again, veiling its unfathomable depth. The farmer's wife sighed, looked round at us, and spoke no word. The farmer,

his mind on the day to come, sat wrapped in his earthy wisdom. Behind the silence of these three beings there was an inner abundance that was like the patrimony of a whole village asleep in the night — and like it, threatened. Strange, the intensity with which I felt myself responsible for that invisible patrimony. I went out of the house to walk alone on the highway, and I carried with me a burden that seemed to me tender and in no wise heavy, like a child asleep in my arms.

I walked slowly, not caring where I went. I had promised myself this conversation with my village; but now I found that I had nothing to say. I strolled and lingered, filled with the thought of the ties that bound me to my people. I was one with them, they were one with me. That farmer handing round the bread had made no gift to us at table: he had shared with us and exchanged with us that bread in which all of us had our part. And by that sharing the farmer had not been impoverished but enriched. He had eaten better bread, bread of the community, by that sharing.

I strolled and lingered on the highway, filled with hope among those who seemed to be hopeless; yet even in this I was not cut off from the rest. I was their part in hope. True, we were already beaten. True, all was in suspense. True, all was threatened. Yet despite this, I could not but feel in myself the serenity of victory. Contradiction in terms? I don't give a fig for terms. I was like Pénicot, Hochédé, Alias, Gavaille. Like them, I had no language by which to justify my feeling of victory. But like them I was filled with the sense of my responsibility. And what man can feel himself at one and the same time responsible and hopeless?

Defeat. . . . Victory. . . . Terms I do not know what to make of. One victory exalts, another corrupts. One defeat kills, another brings life. Tell me what seed is lodged in your victory or your defeat, and I will tell you its future.

Life is not definable by situations but by mutations. There is but one victory that I know is sure, and that is the victory that is lodged in the energy of the seed. Sow the seed in the wide black earth and already the seed is victorious, though time must contribute to the triumph of the wheat.

This morning France was a shattered army and a chaotic population. But if in a chaotic population there is a single consciousness animated by a sense of responsibility, the chaos vanishes. A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral. I shall not fret about the loam if somewhere in it a seed lies buried. The seed will drain the loam, and the wheat will blaze.

He who accedes to contemplation transmutes himself into seed. He who makes a discovery pulls me by the sleeve to draw my attention to it. He who invents preaches his invention. How a Hochédé will express himself or act, I do not know, nor does it matter. He will surely spread his tranquil faith. What I do see more clearly now is the prime agent of victory. He who bears in his heart a cathedral to be built is already victorious. He who seeks to become sexton of a finished cathedral is already defeated. Victory is the fruit of love. Only love can say what face shall emerge from the clay. Only love can guide man towards that face. Intelligence is valid only as it serves love.

Concerning the part played by intelligence, we were long in error. We neglected the substance of man. We believed that the virtuosity of base natures could aid in the triumph of noble causes, that shrewd selfishness could exalt spirits to sacrifice, that withered hearts could be a wind of phrases found brotherhood or love. We neglected Being.

From the armored divisions that defeated us I learned a lesson which is to be read in their manual of tactics: 'An

armored division should move against the enemy like water. It should bear lightly against the enemy's wall of defense and advance only at the point where it meets with no resistance.' Men fill small space in the earth's immensity. A continuous wall of men in France would have required a hundred million soldiers. There were always gaps between the units, and through those gaps the tanks made their way. The seed haunted by the sun never fails to find its way between the stones in the ground. And the pure logician, if no sun draws him forth, remains entangled in his logic. What direction should the armored column take to invest the rear of the enemy? I do not know. What should the armored column be for this purpose? It should be weight of sea pressing against dike.

What ought we do? This. That. The contrary of this or that. There is no determinism that governs the future. What ought we be? That is the essential question, the question that concerns spirit and not intelligence. For spirit impregnates intelligence with the creation that is to come forth. And later, intelligence is brought to bed of creation. How should man go about building the first ship ever known? Very complicated, this. The ship will be born of a thousand errors and fumbings. But what should man be to build that first ship? Here I seize the problem of creation at the root. Merchant. Soldier. In love with the prospect of faraway lands. For then of necessity designers and builders will be born of that love. They will drain the energy of workmen and one day launch a ship. What should we do to annihilate a forest? The question is not easy. What be? Obviously, a forest fire.

Tomorrow we of France will enter into the night of defeat. May my country still exist when day dawns again. What ought we do to save my country? I do not know. Contradictory things. Our spiritual heritage must be preserved, else our people will be deprived of their

genius. Our people must be preserved, else our heritage will become lost. For want of a way to reconcile heritage and people in their formulæ, logicians will be tempted to sacrifice either the body or the soul. But I want nothing to do with logicians. I want my country to exist both in the flesh and in the spirit when day dawns. Therefore I must bear with all the weight of my love in that direction. There is no passage the sea cannot clear for itself if it bear with all its weight.

We are warmed by the awareness of the ties that bind us to our people — wherefore we feel ourselves already victorious. We know that we are one with the rest. But that the rest may know it, we must learn to express it. That is a matter of consciousness and language. A matter also of avoiding the verbal traps of superficial logic and polemical wrangling in which substance is destroyed. Above all, we must not reject any part of that to which we belong.

And therefore I, leaning back against a wall in the silence of the village night, home from my flight to Arras, enlightened, as it seemed to me, by my flight to Arras, imposed upon myself these rules that I shall never betray.

Since I am one with the people of France, I shall never reject my people, whatever they may do. I shall never preach against them in the hearing of others. Whenever it is possible to take their defense, I shall defend them. If they cover me with shame, I shall lock up that shame in my heart and be silent. Whatever at such a time I shall think of them, I shall never bear witness against them. Does a husband go from house to house crying out to his neighbors that his wife is a strumpet? Is it thus that he can preserve his honor? No, for his wife is one with his home. No, for he cannot establish his dignity against her. Let him go home to her, and there unburden himself of his anger.

Thus, I shall not divorce myself from

a defeat which surely will often humiliate me. I am part of France, and France is part of me. France brought forth men called Pascal, Renoir, Pasteur, Guillaumet, Hochedé. She brought forth also men who were inept, were politicians, were cheats. But it would be too easy for a man to declare himself part of the first France and not of the other.

Defeat divides men. Defeat unbinds that which was bound. In this unbinding there is danger of death. I shall not contribute to these divisions between Frenchmen by casting the responsibility for the disaster upon those of my people who think differently from me. Where there is no judge, nothing is to be gained by hurling accusations. All Frenchmen were defeated together. I was defeated. Hochedé was defeated. Hochedé does not blame others for the defeat. Hochedé says to himself, 'I, Hochedé, who am one with France, was weak. France that is one with me, Hochedé, was weak. I was weak in her, and she in me.' Hochedé knows perfectly that once he begins distinguishing between his people and himself, he glorifies only himself. And from that moment there ceases to exist a Hochedé who is part of a home, a family, a Group, a nation: there remains a Hochedé who is part of a desert.

If I take upon myself a share in my family's humiliation I shall be able to influence my family. It is part of me, as I am of it. But if I reject its humiliation, my family must collapse; and I shall wander alone, filled with vainglory, but a shell as empty as a corpse.

I reject non-being. My purpose is to be. And if I am to be, I must begin by assuming responsibility. Only a few hours ago I was blind. I was bitter. But now I am able to judge more clearly. Just as I refuse to complain of other Frenchmen, since now I feel myself one with France, so I am no longer able to conceive that France has the right to complain of the rest of the world. Each

is responsible for all. France was responsible for all the world. Had France been France, she might have stood to the world as the common ideal round which the world would have rallied. She might have served as the keystone in the world's arch. Had France possessed the flavor of France, the radiation of France, the whole world would have been magnetized into a resistance of which the spearhead would have been France. I reject henceforth my reproaches against the world. Assuming that at a given moment the world lacked a soul, France owed it to herself to serve as the world's soul.

The spiritual communion of men the world over did not operate in our favor. But had we stood for that communion of men, we should have saved the world and ourselves. In that task we failed. Each is responsible for all. Each is by himself responsible. Each by himself is responsible for all. I understand now for the first time the mystery of the religion whence was born the civilization I claim as my own: 'To bear the sins of man.' Each man bears the sins of all men.

This being so, I shall carry out to the end the obligations laid upon me by my civilization. I shall consider that I am responsible not only for my own weakness but for the fanaticism of my enemy. To confess this guilt is to be neither soft nor tame-spirited. It is to abide by a principle of action. Had we considered ourselves responsible for the freezing up of our aerial cannon, our aerial cannon would not have frozen up. But when we proclaimed ourselves innocent of the faults of others, we lost the power to influence those others and to persuade them to produce flawless cannon. If I excuse myself on pretext of fatality, I subject myself to fatality. For my part, I refuse this subjection. Fatality does not exist. I am endowed with the power to influence that whole of which I form part. I am a constituent part of the community of mankind.

XXV

A religion that complained of the existence of infidels would seem to us preposterous. Where are religions recruited except among the heathen? A civilization is like a religion: it is a seed, and its function is to drain and convert. My civilization and the Christian values out of which it was born were placed in jeopardy by my failure. There was a time when those values radiated energy. Why is it that they are unable to make their way in my enemy?

It is distasteful to me to cast all the blame for this upon my enemy. It is distasteful to me to play the part of the lamb in order to denounce the wolf. The wolf is action. The lamb is inertia. To play the lamb may soothe my conscience, but it makes me out a victim. The rôle of victim is distasteful to me.

There was a time when my civilization was action. It transformed mankind, freed slaves, cast down the cruel, reigned over empires. And am I to snivel and whine, call myself a poor bullied lamb? I do not feel that I was born to play this miserable part. If I am feeble, the reason is that somewhere I was false to the rules that once made me strong. I know what happened. I waited until I was in jeopardy before taking thought of my civilization. As soon as danger threatened, I took shelter behind my civilization. 'What!' I cried. 'Are you not ashamed to attack such a beautiful cathedral?' But I had long ceased to be the builder of that cathedral. I had been living in it as sexton, as beadle. Which is to say, as a man defeated. I had been taking advantage of its tranquillity, its tolerance, its warmth. I had been a parasite. It had meant to me no more than a place where I was snug and secure.

My civilization had given me the right to believe in the community of men. Trapped, I had cried out to that community for help. My enemies, I cried, are betraying our community. But my friends pleaded other business. Thus

they too betrayed it. And I had been filled with indignation over their treason. But was I myself not guilty of treason?

When I cried out, I no longer knew what I was crying out about. My civilization had been founded upon the respect for something present in every individual which it called Man. But I had let the notion of Man rot. I myself had confused Man with the individual. When I spoke of the community of men, I no longer knew what I was talking about. It might have been a slave market I was talking about — for I saw my community as a mere numerical sum and not as a Being. I looked upon it as a mere phenomenon of nature. Stones in the rock pile are meaningless; they are endowed with meaning by the cathedral they constitute. Men in the mass are meaningless; they are endowed with dignity by the existence of Man. It was because of this that my civilization had ever and always striven to reveal Man to men, to define that universal being, Man. And Man, exalted as the object to be revered by the individual, in turn exalted the individual. It was Man as a quality inherent in each individual that my civilization taught me to respect.

How were my enemies to understand this when I myself no longer understood it? When I myself had ceased to speak of the rights of Man and was mouthing phrases about the rights of the collectivity, of the mass? Here and there I and my kind had still retained a vague notion of the truth. We still agreed, for example, that a hundred men ought to risk their lives to save the life of a single miner entombed; and that if ten of those men died, their death was nevertheless profitable, since they died paying homage to Man. And we recognized that the miner rescued could be called upon to help rescue another miner entombed — since it was not he, the individual, who had been saved, but Man in his person.

Yet little by little I had forgotten Man.

My civilization had declared that all men were equal. But when I forgot Man I ceased to know the meaning of my words. Men are equal *in* something. Stones are equal in the cathedral. The soldier and the captain are equal in the nation. Men are equal in Man. It is this specific equality that demands of the physician, however distinguished he may be, that he risk his life in the treatment of a plague-infested nobody. That nobody is not an individual, he is a representative of Man. It is not as a political individual, or an economic individual, but strictly as a human being that he is the object of the physician's care, and the equal of the physician. My civilization forbade me to enslave men, which is to say, enslave Man. It forbade me to put any obstacle in the way of the upward striving of the individual, which is to say, prevent Man, present in the individual, from ennobling the human race and enriching the human community by his creation. Man makes a choice of this or that individual as the vessel of Man's expression, and I have no right to bar the passage of that vessel. True equality is equality in respect of the rights possessed by Man present in every individual.

My civilization implied the liberty of Man. Every individual is free in it to enunciate the new verity that has taken shape in his consciousness, to bring forth the new poem, the new theory, the new song born in him. No tyrant may constrain him to silence. For through him it is Man that creates. But my civilization also guaranteed the individual against the tyranny that might be exercised by the sum of other individuals. It is intolerable that a single individual should oppress the mass. But it is also intolerable that the mass crush out the creative impulse of Man at work in a single individual.

But I, forgetting Man, defined my liberty by asserting that it must stop at the point where it does injury to the liberty of my neighbor. This seeming ideal is void of meaning, for in fact no man can

act without involving other men. If I, being a soldier, mutilate myself, I am shot. An isolated individual does not exist. He who is sad saddens others.

But above all, forgetting Man I forgot the true significance of sacrifice. If we are to draw our substance from a whole greater than ourselves, receive our significance from it, we must first see that it exists. Man must give before he can receive, and build before he can inhabit. The gift to something greater than oneself is what my civilization called sacrifice. If I insist upon giving only to myself, I shall receive nothing. I shall be building nothing of which I am to form part, and therefore I shall be nothing. And when, afterwards, you come to me and ask me to die for a cause, I shall refuse to die. My own cause commands me to live. Where is that rush of love that will compensate my death? Man dies for a home, not for walls and tables. Man dies for a cathedral, not for stones. Man dies for a people, not for a mob. Man dies for love of Man, if Man is the keystone in the arch of a community. Man dies for that by which alone he cared to live.

There is a mystery here that is like the mystery of the infant's milk. The mother gives to the child. By her giving, she creates her love. To create love, we must begin by sacrifice. Afterwards, it is love that makes the sacrifices. But it is we who must take the first step.

When I took off for Arras I asked to receive before giving. My demand was in vain. We must give before we can receive, build before we can inhabit. By my gift over Arras I created the love that I feel for my kind as the mother creates the breast by the gift of her milk. At first the heart is a desert. The child smiles, and the heart is filled.

I came back from Arras, having woven my ties with my farmer's family. By the smile of his niece I saw the wheat of my village. By the aid of my village I saw my country. By the aid of my country,

all other countries. I came back to take my place in a civilization which has chosen Man as the keystone in its arch. I came back to take my place in Group 2-33, the Group that had volunteered to fight for Norway. I came back to be one of those who are made richer — not poorer — by the wealth of other countries. The web that is strong has no fear of diversity; it delights in the variety of the strands that compose it. In the ages of faith the cathedrals were able to absorb gargoyles as easily as saints into their canticle. Tulips are grown in Holland, flamencos are sung in Spain, Christmas is snowy in Norway — and by all these I am enriched, for I partake of Man.

I dressed this day for the service of a god to whose being I was blind. Arras unsealed my eyes. Like the others of the Group, I am no longer blind. It may be that tomorrow Alias will order me to fly still another sortie. If, at dawn tomorrow, I fight again, I shall know finally why I fight. Not for victory, since the war is already lost, but for self-fulfillment.

My eyes have been unsealed, and I want now to remember what it is that they have seen. I feel the need of a simple Credo so that I may remember.

I believe in the submission of the individual to Man and of the particular to the universal.

I believe that the cult of the universal exalts and heightens our particular riches, and founds the sole veritable order which is the order of life. A tree is a unit despite the diversity of its roots and branches; it is an object of order.

I believe that the cult of the particular is the cult of death, for it founds its order upon likeness. It mistakes identity of parts for unity of Being. This is why every foreign way of life, every foreign people, every foreign thought is to it an affront. Its order comes merely to this, that it destroys the cathedral solely to line up the stones in orderly rows.

Therefore I shall fight against all those who strive to impose a particular way of life upon other ways of life, a particular people upon other peoples, a particular race upon other races, a particular system of thought upon other systems of thought.

I believe that the primacy of Man founds the only equality and the only liberty that possess significance. I believe in the equality of the rights of Man inherent in every man. I believe that only liberty makes possible the creations of Man through the instrument of the individual. Equality is not identity. Liberty is not the exaltation of the individual against Man. I shall fight against all those who seek to subject the liberty of Man either to an individual or to the mass of individuals.

I believe that what my civilization calls Charity is the sacrifice granted Man for the purpose of his own fulfillment. Charity is the gift made to Man present in the mediocrity of the individual. It fulfills man. Symbolically, on Maundy Thursday the bishop washes the feet of the poor. There is no worship of the individual in this gesture. The charity and the piety that flow from it speak to us neither of inferiority nor of demagoguery. They exalt the individual solely in the fact of recognizing Man present in his person. I shall fight against all those who, maintaining that my charity pays homage to mediocrity, would destroy Man and thus imprison the individual in an irredeemable mediocrity.

I shall fight for Man. Against Man's enemies — but against myself as well.

XXVI

We collected again at midnight to receive orders. Group 2-33 was sleepy. The flame in the fireplace had turned to embers. The Group seemed to be holding up still, but this was an illusion. Hochedé was staring glumly at his precious watch. Pénicot stood against a

wall in a corner, his eyes shut. Gavaille, sitting on a table, his glance vacant and legs hanging, was pouting like a child about to cry. The doctor was nodding over a book. Alias alone was still alert, but frighteningly pale, papers before him under the lamplight, discussing something in a low voice with Geley. Discussion, indeed, gives you a false picture. The major was talking. Geley was nodding his head and saying, 'Yes, of course.' Geley was hanging on to that 'Yes, of course' by main strength. He was clinging more and more eagerly to the major's discourse, like a half-drowned man to the neck of a swimmer. Had I been Alias I should have said without a change of voice, 'Captain Geley, you are to be shot at dawn,' and waited for the answer.

The Group had not slept for three nights. It stood like a house of cards.

The major got up, went across to Lacordaire, and pulled him out of a dream in which perhaps he was beating me at chess.

'Lacordaire! You take off at dawn. Ground-scraper sortie.'

'Very good, Major.'

'Better get some sleep.'

'Yes, Major.'

Lacordaire sat down again. The major went out, drawing Geley in his wake as if he were a dead fish on the end of a line. It was nearer a week than three days since Geley had been to bed. Like Alias, not only did he fly his sorties, but he carried part of the burden of responsibility for the Group. Human resistance has its limits: Geley seemed to have crossed his. Yet there they were, the swimmer and his burden, going off to the Staff for phantom orders.

Vesain, the skeptical Vesain, asleep on his feet, came teetering over to me like a somnambulist:—

'You asleep?'

'I . . .'

I had been lying back in an armchair (for I had found an armchair) and was indeed dropping off. But Vesain's voice bothered me. What was it he had said? 'Looks bad, old boy. . . . Categorically blocked. . . . Looks bad. . . .'

'You sleep?'

'I . . . No. . . . What did you say looks bad?'

'The war,' he said.

That was news, now! I started to drop off again and murmured vaguely, 'What war?'

'What do you mean, "What war"?!'

The major flung open the door and called out, 'All set! We move out tonight!'

Behind him stood Geley, wide awake. He would put off his 'Yes, of course' until tomorrow night. Once again he would somehow find a reserve of strength in himself to help him with the wearying chores of our removal.

The Group got to its feet. The Group said, 'Move again? Very good, sir.' What else was there to say.

There was nothing to say. We should see to the removal. Lacordaire would stay behind and take off at dawn. If he got back he would meet us at our new base.

There would be nothing to say tomorrow, either. Tomorrow, in the eyes of the bystanders, we would be the defeated. The defeated have no right to speak. No more right to speak than has the seed.

(The End)

HATTERAS

BY CONRAD AIKEN

SOUTHEAST, and storm, and every weathervane
shivers and moans upon its dripping pin,
ragged on chimneys the cloud whips, the rain
howls at the flues and windows to get in,

the golden rooster claps his golden wings
and from the Baptist Chapel shrieks no more,
the quivering arrow into the southeast sings,
and hears on the roof the Atlantic ocean roar.

Waves among wires, sea scudding over poles,
down every alley the magnificence of rain —
dead gutters thrill once more, and the manholes
hollo in triumph a passage to the main.

Umbrellas, and in the Gardens one old man
hurries away along a dancing path,
listens to music on a watering-can,
observes among the tulips the sudden wrath,

pale willows thrashing to the needled lake,
and dinghies filled with water, while the sky
smashes the lilacs, swoops to shake and break
till shattered branches wail and railings cry.

Speak, Hatteras, your language of the sea,
scour with kelp and spindrift the stale street,
that man in terror may learn once more to be
kin to that rage where rock and ocean meet.

WHAT MAKES A GERMAN

BY RAOUL DE ROUSSY DE SALES

I

THE Germans are the only people who pretend to be incomprehensible to anyone not born a German. Sometimes this assertion is made boastfully, sometimes with regret. One must accept the premise that it is sincere, and not merely an easy way to evade many of the troublesome questions that are constantly asked about the Germans, and to the Germans by other people.

To cloak oneself with mystery, to say that one is different and one's soul so exceptional that none can understand you, is of course one of the familiar affectations of the romantic.

To break feminine hearts, to get very drunk or even to indulge in opium, hashish, and cocaine, may not be commendable from the point of view of bourgeois morality and social hygiene, but the fact that the romantics have usually been strictly interested in themselves, and very little interested in what was going on around them, has made them relatively innocuous.

But when we speak of the romantics of England, France, America, and other Western countries, we should not forget that across the Rhine romanticism took a very different form, or rather that — under its Germanic aspect — this explosion of sentimental emotionalism, of inflated egotism and poetic license, translated itself into something forceful, aggressive, bloody, racial, and barbaric.

The most important difference between the romanticism of the Western countries and German romanticism is to

be found in the fact that whereas, on this side of the Rhine, romanticism has remained within the frame of laws and restrictions generally accepted by the Western people, this same movement in Germany has become a philosophy of life, affecting politics as well as art, science as well as economics. Western romanticism had a great effect on the shaping of the individual, at least for a while. It had little effect on the political history of the countries concerned. In Germany, on the contrary, romanticism became all-embracing and served to justify some of the most extreme and dangerous contradictions of modern Germany. Neither in England nor in France can one find the equivalent of a Richard Wagner or even of a Goethe — that is, of artists serving at once to create and to become part of what the Germans call *Weltanschauung*.

The specific meaning of the word *Weltanschauung* — in itself a sort of Teutonic metaphysical battle cry — has been described many times. I merely wish to point out that the whole trend of German poetry, philosophy, and scientific thinking of the last one hundred and fifty years seems to have been towards establishing further impassable barriers between things essentially German and things not German. In other words, the great romantic discovery that man is ever lonely, ever incomprehensible, ever victimized by the rigors of a disciplined society; that true expression of the divine ego can only be found through breaking

all codes of morality and all laws — all this rebellion of the individual against his surroundings which was characteristic of the two or three generations preceding ours has been transmuted by the Germans into a national theme. The whole German people now visualize themselves as the incarnation of the great romantic age. They are at once the Chosen People, the Master Race and the Victim Race (compare this to the attitude of mind of the Montparnasse or Greenwich Village artist). They are a force of nature and also the superachievement of man-the-hero. They are wild and fearless, ruthless and cruel. But they are also the tenderest people on earth, the most loving of children and helpless animals. They cultivate and admire with equal fervor sentimentality and boorishness, individual acts of kindness and organized cruelty.

All these contradictions which the Germans would not condone in another people, they justify for themselves because it is the fundamental theme of romanticism that the ego is the supreme law unto itself, it being understood that other egos can under no circumstances be considered as having equivalent rights or even equivalent value. Such an admission would imply necessarily the existence of such things as justice, morality, law, and other anti-romantic notions.

II

It is interesting to note that Adolf Hitler is the perfect example of the romantic hero made accessible to the greatest possible number. He is curiously unmodern. *Mein Kampf* is not a book of the future, nor even of the present. It belongs definitely to the latter half of the last century — to that rather indecent school of writing which began with the *Confessions* of Rousseau and produced the greatest quantity of unregulated intellectual exhibitionism that the world has known. The very title of the book is revealing — *My Struggle*. It is a subject-

tive outburst in which the author is totally unable to disassociate his own story and his own self from the events around him. Hitler is constantly sorry for himself, and finds an obvious enjoyment in describing his difficult youth: how he was made to suffer because no one recognized his genius as a painter, how hard and unjust the world is to the poor and unknown, and at the same time how marvelous it is to have been poor and unknown and to be now on the way to ruling the world.

'I did not want to become an official,' writes Hitler describing his troubles with his father in his early youth. 'Neither persuasion nor "sincere" arguments were able to break down this resistance. I did not want to become an official, no, and again no! . . . The thought of being a slave in an office made me ill; not to be master of my own time, but to force an entire lifetime into the filling-in of forms.'

I wonder how many times the reader has come across precisely this kind of stuff, or how many readers perhaps have themselves been tempted to write in this vein about their own childhood.

Hitler, like all romantics, is inordinately proud of his own childish conflicts and does not shy at telling us what a bad little boy he was.

'What ideas this must have awakened in a boy who was anything but "good" in the ordinary sense of the word!' he goes on. 'The ridiculously easy learning at school left me so much spare time that the sun saw more of me than the four walls of my room. When today my political opponents examine my life down to the time of my childhood with loving attention, so that at last they can point with relief to the intolerable pranks this "Hitler" carried out even in his youth, I thank Heaven for now giving me a share of the memories of those happy days. Woods and meadows were the battlefield where the ever-present "conflicts" were fought out.'

Thus the great Romantic — left over

from another age — depicts himself with a time-tested mixture of naïveté, complacency, and smugness.

But there are other passages in *Mein Kampf*, as well as in Hitler's speeches, where the frustrated artist expresses aspects of romanticism which are considerably less innocuous and not in conformity with the outworn Father and Son motif. These are the passages where Hitler preaches the great rebellion against law, against reason, against independent criticism, against charity and tolerance. These are the passages where Hitler gives a new meaning to the word 'liberation.' 'For liberation something more is necessary than an economic policy, something more than industry: if a people is to become free, it needs pride, and will power, defiance, hate, hate, and once again hate. . . .'

The son of the Austrian official who rowed with his father because he would not let him paint has now merged his own individualistic romanticism with the romanticism of the German Volk.

This merger is so complete that it has baffled most of the foreign statesmen who came into contact with Hitler. For the Western mind it is difficult to conceive that an individual, the leader of 80 million people, should in fact be so totally an incarnation of something as organic and undefinable as the German Volk that he ceases to be recognizable as a personality.

But this very shadowiness of Hitler's figure, his lack of style, of measure, his inability to limit himself, either in his speeches or in his conquests, the vagueness of his purpose, the whole impression of something blurred, uncontrolled, and totally reckless which the name of Adolf Hitler brings to the consciousness of the foreigner — all this is what makes Hitler indissolubly united with an aspect of the German temperament that tends to overshadow all others.

Mr. H. R. Knickerbocker quotes an interview he had with Dr. Jung in October 1938, which is quite illuminating on the

problem of the relation of Hitler to Germany.

'I asked [Dr. Jung], writes Mr. Knickerbocker, "Why is it that Hitler, who makes nearly every German fall down and worship him, produces next to no impression on any foreigner?"'

'Exactly,' Dr. Jung assented. 'Few foreigners respond at all, yet apparently every German in Germany does. It is because Hitler is the mirror of every German's unconscious, but of course he mirrors nothing from a non-German.'

An illustration of this was given by no less an authority than Dr. Hermann Rauschning in an interview given to the *New York Times* on November 9, 1941.

'One strength of Hitler,' said Dr. Rauschning, 'is that in Hitler's presence a man feels the complications being cut out of his mind, and we are such a complicated people, there is relief in that.' He described an occasion when he had gone into Hitler's office at the same time as Baron von Neurath, the Foreign Minister. 'The Foreign Minister was like a schoolboy who has been sent for by his chief master, he knows not why. *To be small, to be obedient, to merit no punishment, was his aim. Why? I cannot tell you, yet I know how he felt. I was myself like a schoolboy in Hitler's presence. In Danzig I opposed him and what he stood for. In his presence I never opposed him. I think I might have found it impossible. He causes fear. I do not know why. And I have heard Herr Dr. Schacht, the Finance Minister, say that when he left Hitler it was with a feeling that he was bigger, braver, than he had been before. He said that for some time after returning to his office he felt braver, bigger, as though he could accomplish the impossible.*'¹

Now Dr. Rauschning is definitely not a follower of Hitler today and he has shown that he was aware of some of the

¹ Note that Dr. Rauschning is, like all Germans, a believer in the romantic concept of the Germans being complicated and somewhat unexplainable to anyone, including himself.

implications of the Nazi Revolution. But Dr. Rauschning is a German, and from that point of view his testimonial regarding the effect produced by Hitler on men not known to be particularly emotional, such as von Neurath and Dr. Schacht (not to speak of Dr. Rauschning himself), is illuminating. No wonder that Dr. Jung in his interview with Mr. Knickerbocker could compare Hitler to a seer, to a tribal witch doctor, to a new Mohammed, and call him the Messiah of the German people.

'He [Hitler] is the loud-speaker which magnifies the inaudible whispers of the German soul until they can be heard by the German's conscious ear. He is the first man to tell every German what he has been thinking and feeling all along in his unconscious about German fate, especially since the defeat in the World War; and the one characteristic which colors every German soul is the typically German inferiority complex. . . . Hitler's power is not political; it is *magic*.'

Hitler himself has expressed many times the idea that there existed between himself and the German people a mystical tie, that he was not only their spokesman and ruler but their living incarnation. Hitler believes he is in fact the German people, the visible and acting representation of this 'collective organic mystical entity which is greater than the sum of its individuals' (Peter Viereck, *Metapolitics*, p. 196) called the *Volk*.

III

It is well-nigh impossible for the Western mind, which is used to words like 'people' or 'nation,' to understand what a word like 'Volk' means to the Germans. It does not merely signify the sum of the individuals of German birth. 'Volk' is an all-embracing word, the connotations of which are at once historical, lyrical, and metaphysical. The Volk is not comparable to anything else. There are not several Volks. The French, the English, the Americans are not Volks.

Only the Germans form a Volk — *the Volk*.

The Volk is bound by no law, except those of nature; but nature in turn finds its most perfect expression through the manifestations of the Volk. The Volk is superior to everything conceivable, and particularly to all other human groups. The Volk's mission is to impose its metaphysical domination over the world because it is better qualified (by its own standards, which are the only ones recognized) to do so.

Anyone who has the unrewarded courage to read Fichte or Hegel must be struck by the painstaking effort of these two prophets of true Germanism to rationalize the irrational and to try to explain in plausible language certain impulses which, if they were described in unphilosophical terms, would hardly retain the attention of anyone. Fichte and Hegel are true romantics, and German romantics at that, which means that they have the ability to the highest degree to confuse obscurity and depth, complication and insight, and especially what they feel as Germans with what they think is right for mankind.

Hitler has brought down to a popular level the teaching of these prophets of modern Germanism which had already been made more accessible by Gobineau, Houston Chamberlain, and especially Richard Wagner. But in bringing such ideas to the masses, one should not think that Hitler has made them either clearer or sounder. Quite the opposite. If Hitler has a claim to a real talent, it is his understanding of the art of debasing the intelligence of the masses. In order to assure the triumph of the Volk idea both in Germany and in the world, Hitler has no hesitation at all in recommending that the Volk should be lied to, deceived and fooled by its leaders — that is, by the incarnation of the Volk itself.

This is the level to which the ideas of Fichte concerning the sacred amorality of the State and the turgid romanticism of Richard Wagner are brought down

through the practical mind of Adolf Hitler. All the highfalutin metaphysics and apocalyptic poetry so dear to the Germans and their admirers finally ends in Hitler's recipes on the art of propaganda, in which he makes the interesting discovery that this great Volk may be divine but is certainly deprived of intelligence. 'The great masses' receptive ability is only very limited, their understanding is small, but their forgetfulness is great,' writes Hitler. And again: 'The people, in an overwhelming majority, are so feminine in their nature and attitude that their activities and thoughts are motivated less by sober consideration than by feeling and sentiment.'

The foreigner may sometimes wonder how Hitler can possibly reconcile this obviously sincere scorn for the intelligence of the people — an attitude of mind which makes him appear as one of the greatest cynics of all times — and his fanatical glorification of these same people (Volk) and of himself as their living incarnation. Hitler offers the strange spectacle of a Messiah despising the Chosen People which he leads because the inner logic (if such a word can be used here) of the whole German conception of ruthless amorality makes it necessary that the Chosen People themselves should be treated like beasts. Thus the theory of racial superiority, of the divine right of the German Volk to rule all other people, and similar ideas nurtured by a long line of pre-Nazi prophets, when finally expressed by Hitler and his friends, end in a series of contradictions: Hitler is a witch-doctor, a seer, and a new Mohammed. He is the reincarnation of Barbarossa and Siegfried. He is the heir of Charlemagne, Frederick the Great, and Bismarck. He is the nearest thing to a god that so-called rational human beings have wanted to recognize in many centuries. But his mind is that of a very cheap type of underdog, such as this civilization of ours can too often produce, and which creates gangsters or, at best, second-rate professors in cynicism.

IV

Hitlerism has brought about the perfect synthesis between apparently irreconcilable concepts: the romanticism of the last century and the machine efficiency of the present day. One has been made to serve the other. The 'blue flower' has turned into a Stuka propeller. Goebbels, Rosenberg, and other Nazi doctrinaires have created what they call 'steel romanticism.' Heroism, Death, Sacrifice, Purification by the Sword and by Blood, the final rest in Valhalla, all these Wagnerian themes so vague but so poignant for the Germans have been turned magically into some sort of spiritual fuel for the panzer divisions and the bomber planes.

Other contradictions have been solved, or rather made to act as forces directed towards the same aim. The Germans have now succeeded in combining a condition of chronic hysteria with perfect efficiency. Whoever has listened to the crowds greeting a speech by Hitler knows what I am talking about. It is frenzy, but it is organized frenzy. The delirium has been regulated like everything else. Heroism on the battlefield seems, by many accounts, to be of the same order. German heroism is never gratuitous. The German hero seems to remain thoroughly conscious of being part of something organic, larger than himself, larger than his regiment, larger than the German army or perhaps even than the sum total of all the Germans dead and alive. The German hero does not seem to find in death that final loneliness so characteristic of the Western attitude towards death. Through death he reintegrates himself even more completely into the metaphysical All called the Volk.

Through Hitler, the Germanic tendency to identify brutality with strength, cruelty with manliness, hardness with determination, has been brought to perfection. Mr. William Shirer in his *Berlin Diary* shows his astonishment at the capacity of the Germans for being at

once so kind and so brutal. 'The German has two characters,' he writes (p. 585). 'As an individual he will give his rationed bread to feed squirrels in the Tiergarten on a Sunday morning. He can be a kind and a considerate person. But as a unit in the Germanic mass he can persecute Jews, torture and murder his fellow men in a concentration camp, massacre women and children by bombardment, overrun without the slightest justification the lands of other peoples, cut them down if they protest and enslave them.'

The remark of Mr. Shirer concerning the difference in behavior between the German acting as an individual and the German acting as a unit in a mass brings up a point which is of general importance. All men, to whatever nation they belong, tend to act differently as persons and as members of that nation. The greatness or validity of a nation as a civilizing factor can be measured by the degree to which it approximates the recognized standards of usual morality which are applied to individuals.

It must be admitted that all nations, including those that most ardently profess their attachment to a code of morality, have a tendency to behave much more like organized gangs of brigands than like communities of civilized men. Formulæ of exception, such as 'sacred egotism,' 'My country right or wrong,' 'the undisputed primacy of patriotism,' are called for to justify actions by the state which have no excuse whatsoever according to ordinary ethics. The nation or the state is admittedly somewhat beyond good and evil, and dealings between states or nations are conducted according to rules that would lead the ordinary citizen to jail if he applied them in his personal dealings with other citizens.

But this being admitted, there are nevertheless very important differences between the various nations in the manner they practise or tolerate international immorality. It also makes a great

difference whether the individual citizen belongs to a nation which condemns international gangsterism (though it may resort to it at times) or to one which glorifies it and considers it as the fundamental law of nature and the national guiding principle.

There is no reason to suppose that the individual German as a human being is essentially different from the individual Frenchman, Englishman, or American. The capacity for cruelty, kindness, brutality, pity, is probably fairly evenly divided among men who on the whole belong to the same biological stock and have been submitted to the same broad influences. This is why people are right, at least in theory, who say that it is at once unreasonable and dangerous to treat the Germans as if they belonged to a different species from the rest of the white race. Germans who have emigrated to America have given ample proof of their adaptability to a society which condemns practically everything that is now associated with the name of Germany.

This is why these same people are right also — always in theory — in assuming that the way to solve the German problem is to separate the German people, who are individually identical with all other men, from those who lead them astray and pervert their morals. The First World War was fought on the assumption that, once the Kaiser and the military clique of Germany were removed, the German people would automatically renounce war and the practice of force. Today, Hitler has been substituted for Kaiser Wilhelm, and the same idea prevails: once Hitler and the Nazis are out, the rest of the world will have no difficulty in dealing with the German people on a basis of mutual understanding and in a spirit of human brotherhood. The prevalent idea, especially in America, is that the only reason the good German — that is, the one who feeds squirrels in the Tiergarten and would adopt democracy — cannot exor-

cise the bad German who shoots hostages and puts Jews in concentration camps is Adolf Hitler and his friends.

If only the problem of Germanism were as simple as that! But I think that the time has come to take a more realistic view of the situation which confronts us.

V

The truth is that, whereas the individual Britisher or American — whether he is a decent citizen or not — belongs to an order of society which openly and constantly recommends law, moral discipline, tolerance, order, and other *civilized* virtues, the German unfortunately has been submitted for centuries to a series of influences which have taught him that the great mission of the Teutonic people is to overthrow the Western world, to rid themselves of its moral disciplines, of its rationalism, and of its concept that there is a law above men.

This has been going on, under one form or another, since the Romans had to erect Maginot Lines against the hordes of the East. And unfortunately, the modern German is far from being on the mend as compared to his ancestor of the time of Arminius. Quite the contrary. Back of him there is now over one hundred years of romantic and militaristic education; one hundred years of pan-Germanic propaganda and barbaric exaltation. The modern German is further away from the trend of Western civilization than was even the German who fought the war of 1914-1918. He is further away because Hitler and National Socialism are not an accidental outbreak, the temporary and feverish expression of a sentiment of revolt of an oppressed people: Hitler and National Socialism are the final blossoming of a very long evolution, the most perfect synthesis of this aspect of Germanism which finds satisfaction in the irrational romanticism of Richard Wagner, in the heretic racial scientific divagations of Houston Chamberlain, Gobineau, and

Rosenberg and in the militaristic ruthlessness of Clausewitz, Treitschke, Ludendorff, Banse, Haushofer, and others.

We should stop and think. What would be the effect on the morality of the average American citizen if high officers of the United States Army wrote the kind of books which form the bulk of German military literature? In these books, war is presented as the supreme aim of the nation. But these are not mere technical books, such as those published by army officers the world over. As is usual with everything German, they overlap into other fields. They deal, and have always dealt, with what we now call 'total war' — a form of warfare which engulfs the whole of the nation and the whole of man. These books teach that war must be not only ruthless, but cruel if necessary. They advocate the suspension of all laws of humanity under the pretense that the worse a war is, the sooner it will come to an end — the sooner the enemy is exterminated, the sooner the peace will reign. Treachery, deceit, absolute ruthlessness are preached; ordinary laws of humanity and decency are scorned.

People for whom it has become a parlor game to quote passages out of *Mein Kampf* to show the immorality of Hitler's Germany overlook the fact that Hitler is relatively mild compared to a good many German military writers whose works form part of the popular education. These military writers are more sinister than the romantic Nazis of the Hitler or Rosenberg type, because they assume an air of scientific authority to demonstrate the necessity of concentrating the whole effort of the nation towards war, and to a type of war which knows no law, and no restriction whatsoever.

The combination of German military dogmatism and of the fanatical exaltation of the Nazi whirling dervishes is the overwhelming force which dominates the German soul of today. The outside world must realize that, under such a

régime, it matters very little whether Fritz and Hans are kind, humane, appreciative of the higher values of life (such as we conceive them), and in general civilized. All these tendencies are combated by the surroundings in which they live. The highest entity in which they are asked to believe and to which they belong, the German Volk, is presented to them as a negation of these values, as a great force of destruction.

Human nature being what it is, a mixture of good and bad, this appalling thing called Germanism is certainly not sufficient to destroy in every German all the good that is in him as in any other man. But to expect anything but brutality, stupidity, and barbarism from this same German when acting as a unit in the mass is expecting too much. Germanism, in its most positive manifestations, is one of the most dangerous forms of human destructiveness that history has known. And the trouble with it is that the sinister aspects of Germanism, far from being on the wane, are obviously on the ascendant. Hitler is the last phase of an evolution towards total evil which has been pursued under the various incarnations of the primitive Teutonic tribe, the German concept of State, Prussian militarism, and the notion of Volk for several centuries.

VI

I am well aware of the theory of the 'two souls' of Germany as expressed in the often quoted passage of Goethe: 'Two souls, alas, dwell in my breast together; the one wants separation from the other.' The whole personality of Goethe is cited as typical of this ability or even desire of the German mind to split, and there is the great Faustian theme in which the symbol of the German psyche can be recognized.

There is the fact that Germany has produced philosophers and artists, as well as eminent individuals in all walks of life, who have expressed an aspect of

Germany radically antithetic to the one described in the preceding pages. Germany is not wholly anti-Western. Germany, like a giant pendulum, oscillates between attraction to the West and repulsion from it. Germany's friends, as well as many Germans, believe that the whole problem of Germany is how to stabilize this perennial swing between German rebellion against the West and coöperation with the West.

No one denies that that pendulum movement exists, nor can anyone be blind to the fact that we are witnessing one of its sharpest and most dangerous swings. In fact, this time the whole Western world is definitely threatened by it. Adolf Hitler is mincing no words about it. His purpose is the destruction of the Western world and what it stands for, and there is no reason to suppose that he will not carry out his plan if he can.

This being so, the question is whether this excess will be followed by a swing in the other direction. If Nazi Germany is defeated in this war, can we expect a period during which the other soul of Germany will again manifest itself?

This is obviously the hope of most liberals in the Anglo-Saxon countries. It is also the hope, quite naturally, of all the Germans who are out of Germany, fighting Naziism and wanting their country to be saved eventually. This is a natural hope because it is reasonable to expect that after a movement as extreme as National Socialism has spent itself or been destroyed a period of moderation will follow.

This may well happen, but looking back on German history is not reassuring. If one admits the theory of the two Germanies, and of a kind of oscillation between the good and the bad, the constructive and the destructive (from the Western point of view), one cannot escape the conclusion that the bad outweighs the good to such an extent that it is difficult to adopt a purely statistical attitude towards such a problem.

It is not easy to weigh with the same scales a quartet of Beethoven and a panzer division, a page of Goethe and the practices of the concentration camps. But for that very reason there is a fallacy in the reasoning of those who pretend that Bach, Beethoven, Schiller, and Goethe atone, in a certain way, for the brutality and ruthlessness of Germany in the realm of politics and war.

The root of the problem is not the outcome of the struggle between the two 'souls' of Germany. The root of the problem is the fact that such dualism exists at all and that on it hinges the fate of the whole civilized world.

No other nation has thought of basing its policy and its world outlook on a case of schizophrenia. No other nation has tried to justify its quasi-pathological manifestations of brutality, lawlessness, and ferocity on the basis that the whole world was leagued against it in some sort of fabulous plot. No other nation has complained so much of being treated unjustly not only by fate but by every other single nation whether powerful or weak. No other nation has practised with such consummate skill and persistence the double blackmail of trying to inspire pity as a victim and terror as a bully.

Again I wish to state that I do not believe that this kind of diseased fermentation in which the Germans are maintained by their cultural leaders makes the individual German necessarily different from other people. But unfortunately it is not with individual Germans that the world has to deal, but with this solid, organic, barely human Thing called the German Volk. And the chances are that it is with this German Volk that the rest of the world will have to deal not only during the war but after.

The German people, acting as a people, are giving no sign that they wish to find some sort of synthesis between themselves and the civilization of the West. The reason for this is that such a synthesis is inconceivable. Germanism

is out to eliminate Western civilization and to supplant it with something totally hostile to it. Germanism cannot be blended with Western civilization.

Hitler is not merely an accident in the evolution of Germany. He is not a 'usurper,' as Napoleon was called by his enemies. No one denies that Hitler is a legitimate German phenomenon, the final product of a very long Teutonic will to rebel against the rule of the West.

The removal of Hitler might plunge Germany into a condition of chaos. It might end the war. It would not solve the German problem, because the roots of Hitlerism go far deeper than the immediate events which seem to have given birth to it.

The solution of the German problem is not visible today because there is no indication whatsoever that the German people are ready to repudiate the dual heritage of romanticism and militarism of which the Nazis are the perfect synthesis.

Moreover, even if one should imagine that after the present rebellion (pre-supposing, of course, it is checked) Germany would swing back to a collaboration with the West, this would not be reassuring in the long run. What is wrong with Germany, what makes the problem of Germanism so much more disturbing and dangerous than any other we have to face, is precisely this faculty of the German soul to move in and out of the orbit of civilization. As long as the Germans (and this applies to some of the best of them) stick to this romantic idea of their dualism, the chances for a durable solution of the German problem will be small indeed.

The world is one, and no progress is conceivable if all nations do not accept and understand the fundamental fact of the unity and universality of civilization. National idiosyncrasies and diversity are not only tolerable; they are necessary to civilization itself. What is not tolerable is the existence of a chronic rebel in our midst.

The purpose of this war is to quell a Germanic revolt against two thousand years of civilization. It is not the first one. Our position has obvious analogies with that of the Roman Empire when it was attacked by the ancestors of the present Germans. Our chances of resisting successfully the onslaught seem, however, to be considerably better than those of the Romans. In spite of many obvious deficiencies — which are political and spiritual as well as material — the countries of the Western world and those siding with them have a resiliency and resources which the Roman

Emperors of the decadence lacked completely.

But even if we obtain total victory over Germany, it will not necessarily mean that a solution of the problem of Germany against the world will be at hand. That solution implies the fundamental transformation of the German outlook on all the essential questions which for so many centuries have faced humanity. The Germans have given no proof of being able to shake off the deadly burden of what they believe is their national destiny: the periodic rejuvenation of mankind through barbarism.

THOSE WHO MAKE POEMS

BY CARL SANDBURG

A MAN writes the best he can about what moves him deeply. Once his writing gets published as a book, he loses control over it. Time and the human family do what they want to with it. It may have periods of wide reading and acclamation, other periods of condemnation, decline, neglect; then a complete fade-out — or maybe a revival. And what revives in later years is often what was neglected when new. This happens. In literature and other arts — it happens.

Of course there are plenty of pieces in my books that I would write in a different way if I had them before me now as manuscripts for revision and rewriting. And, more than that, there are a few pieces I would throw away or lay by as experimental curiosities. A few such there are, though the titles of them are my own private memoranda and nobody's business just now. However, I

could say in confidence that several items had become worn-out for me and had arrived where I would rate them zero — and just about then came along this person and that saying these particular items were tops, were the goods, had what it takes.

Or again certain favorites of mine, so it seemed, were not being read by others as I read them — and I was almost of a notion that these favorites had some personal appeal for me and others were not getting the drift of them. Then after many years would come the surprise of a dancer wishing to build a program number around one of them, or a composer wanting one for a song or a musical setting, or an author for use in a book. I have sat unaware at a radio set and suddenly heard a musical composition or a dramatic sketch or a campaign speech using lines of mine or an entire free-verse piece which for me had long ago

gone where the woodbine twineth and the lizards sleep on sunny slabs of inanimate stone.

Often in my travels with a guitar and a program of readings I have met the man or woman saying, 'I don't get your poetry, Mr. Sandburg, but my son enjoys it and I wonder if I'm old-fashioned,' or, 'I've tried to read your poetry, Mr. Sammer, and it doesn't mean anything to me, but my daughter studied you at college and she has all your books and is trying to tell me what they are about.' The head of the St. Louis public library, Mr. Charles Compton, once made a survey around the question, 'Who reads Sandburg?' and found that beyond a certain array of intellectuals, persons who socially and professionally are strong for Culture with a capital C, there were policemen, taxi drivers, stenographers, beauty-parlor workers, machinists, and a wide range of plain people who could not afford to buy books but were regularly drawing out 'the Sandburg poetry books' from the public library and finding in those books something close to their lives, something that sang to them.

Authors, like any others who do their best in some field of art, are in danger of being tricked and fooled by what their audiences do to them. Many an author would better have shut his ears to all that was ever said or written about him — so much of it was polite conversation or shallow in feeling or washed in malice or prejudice or misunderstanding. I have usually taken time to read such reviews and comments as came my way without particular effort on my part, having seen no less than three well-known authors suffer the pangs of hell from what arrived in the mail through a clipping service they paid for.

That a large body of English teachers in high schools, colleges, and universities have been kindly and favorable to my work in the field of free verse, more than occasionally one of them mentioning this or that student's saying, 'Until we got

into Sandburg, I was never interested in poetry' — this I do not forget. That some of the professional reviewers and critics have been both kindly and eloquent toward my work as a verse writer — this too I do not forget.

Recently a poet was quoted as saying he would as soon play tennis without a net as to write free verse. This is almost as though a zebra should say to a leopard, 'I would rather have stripes than spots,' or as though a leopard should inform a zebra, 'I prefer spots to stripes.'

The poet without imagination or folly enough to play tennis by serving and returning the ball over an invisible net may see himself as highly disciplined. There have been poets who could and did play more than one game of tennis with unseen rackets, volleying airy and fantastic balls over an insubstantial net, on a frail moonlit fabric of a court.

The arguments against free verse are old. They are not, however, as old as free verse itself. When primitive and prehistoric man first spoke with cadence or color, making either musical meaning or melodic nonsense worth keeping and repeating for its definite and intrinsic values, then free verse was born, ages before the sonnet, the ballad, the verse forms wherein the writer or singer must be acutely conscious, even exquisitely aware, of how many syllables are to be arithmetically numbered per line.

The matter should not be argued. Those who make poems and hope their poems are not bad may find readers or listeners — and again they may not. The affair should rest there. Nothing can be proved except that some poets have one kind of readers or listeners — and other poets have other kinds. The mortal and finite rôle of the poet is the same as that of the mathematician who said that after any equation you can write, 'Make the sign of infinity and pass on.' And all adverse critics of any work not yet tested by time come near falling headfirst into the category of the man who enjoys his personal habit of

exclaiming to any and all who vocalize, 'Would you just as soon sing as make that noise?'

To every poet of reputation come the young ones, the beginners, asking, 'Will you look over my poems and tell me whether they are good or not?' And usually, if the beginner is told his poems are bad or not so good or he needs more practice, he gets sore and takes his manuscripts to still other poets of reputation, hoping to find someone who says he has what it takes. Often I have told a nice lad who considered it important to know whether he was wasting his time, 'If you're going to be a poet, you don't care a hoot what I say or what anybody but yourself says. If you're afraid you're wasting your time, you probably are.' Quite a case can be made out that Shakespeare wrote his plays and poems because in the time it took him to do them he couldn't think of anything else he would rather be doing.

'Nothing much in the way of advice is going to help you,' I once wrote to an inquirer. 'You go your own way. You ride whatever horses you want to. You will go here and there and see what the best and the worst have in style, technic, themes . . . and after that go your own way.'

'You will be in danger very likely at any time you listen seriously to dese, dose, and dem, saying you must looksee about dis or dat. Listen, yes, and listen again and do a lot of listening and rebuke yourself about your listening and pray often that you may be a better listener. You may be advised you must not, for instance, listen to shadows, for how can shadows speak? This is where the eyes must join the ears for listening, for the eyes gather the pantomimes of the shadows and there have been rolling thunders issue from a few crooks and crosses of singing fingers. And anyhow and enny-hoo shadows deal in whispers. Successful contradiction of this thesis cannot be maintained. The fact stands. And the fact is immeasurably important, can it

be verified. On this the poets and politicians can have a bowl of chile in peace and understanding. Shadows deal in whispers. Bluebirds burnish their wings with worms they eat. Poets cry their hearts out. If they don't they ain't poets.

'Subsistence won from sharing grief is what? Sorrows blend themselves with sorrows and wryly and bitterly shoot the works of sorrow. Out of it once in a while comes music, companionship, stately consolations. Every good Bach listener is a miniature Bach. Else Bach couldn't get by. You have much to go on. You are licensed to the latest slang; "Is everything under control?" Beware of proud words, sweet gal. On this road you go on lonely and at cost. My prayers are that many strengths be yours, new and harder thongs for the old a ways.

'You are vivid. Go on so. It will cost . . . but go on. Work hard . . . they all do when they are any good at all. The sense of futility will ride you often . . . and this is not too bad, for usually it means a requisite humility is operating. When you are too sure you are good then pray God help your vain little heart. Write much. Write every day. Lay the pieces by. See what happens later.'

Once a college student spoke his anxiety about whether to write his poetry in rhyme or not. The best I could do for him was the advice: 'If it jells into free verse, all right. If it jells into rhyme, all right.'

Any counselor should go slow about being certain as to what a beginner may or may not have. The more original a piece of writing is, the less likely an adviser or critic is to find what is original. Some of the greatest poetry had to go through many tests of time before it came to be accepted. The early American poet, MacDonald Clarke, wrote of this factor: —

'Tis vain for present fame to wish.
Our persons first must be forgotten;
For poets are like stinking fish,
They never shine until they're rotten.

THE NOVELIST IN TRAINING

BY HOWARD SPRING

I

A man has only to be outstanding in Fleet Street to find his name crusted with legends of brusqueness, inconsiderateness, almost downright brutality. So it inevitably was with Lord Beaverbrook. He took men up, it was said, and as casually he threw them down, hardly caring whether they lived or died. For myself, I never found this to be so. On the contrary, I had more than one occasion to discover that Lord Beaverbrook was more than usually sensitive to other people's feelings.

I once referred in the *Evening Standard* to Arnold Bennett's story, 'The Death of Simon Fuge,' as one of the great stories of the English language. In the *Standard* the next day was a brief letter to the editor, signed 'Beaverbrook,' tersely contradicting this opinion. Well, a man has a right to hold and to express any view he pleases, but I was nevertheless surprised that the proprietor of the *Evening Standard* should so shortly and publicly throw over the judgment of one of his 'experts.' However, I did not mind: I had expressed my view; he had expressed his; and if, in order to judge between us, people were led to read the story, so much the better.

I went down to Epsom that night, to be ready to see the Derby the next day, and I was dining in my hotel when a telephone call came through from Lord Beaverbrook. I had not left my address with anybody: he must have gone to some trouble to run me down there. And he had done this because he thought his

letter might have hurt my susceptibilities. He said he hoped I hadn't minded his letter; I replied that I hadn't, and that I should mind it still less if I had the right of reply. 'You certainly have,' he said. 'Say anything about me that you like.' And so he gave me the last word, to the extent of considerably more than a column in the *Standard*. I found him again and again capable of these understanding flashes of feeling.

I met George Moore, as I met Arnold Bennett, only once, and in his case, too, it was towards the end of his life. Again it was a question of a newspaper interview. I called at the house in Ebury Street, and a message was taken up to George Moore, who agreed to see me in an hour's time. When the moment came I climbed the stairs, and there he was in a great chair, his hair white, his face round and as pink as a new-cut ham. I suppose he had devoted some part of the intervening hour to deciding what to say, for I was hardly seated when he began: 'A novel should be shaped like a vase.'

'Why?' I asked.

He had evidently settled down to trot along what I suspect must have been a familiar track, and my question seemed both to annoy and jolt him.

After this, the interview did not go too well, but we talked desultorily of this and that. He seemed surprised to find that I had read his books. A newspaper reporter, I gathered, to come up to his expectations, should neither read books

nor have opinions about how a book might be written. He should be a shorthand writer, ready to make a verbatim record of wisdom bubbling from its spring. We parted with a mutual bristling of the fur.

I have never gone out of my way to meet authors, for I have a horror of seeming to 'run after' either people who are wealthy or those who are in any way distinguished. I can think of only one author I should have liked to meet, and that is Thomas Hardy. My feeling for his work is compounded of reverence as well as admiration. Perhaps, if I had met him, there might now be a cloud over the warmth of my appreciation, though I believe I have learned the importance of thinking of the book apart from the man. Yet, somehow, I imagine I should have found him sympathetic. Everything I hear of him helps me to believe this.

I don't know whether there is any truth in a story I once heard, but it sounds 'in character,' except that I cannot conceive Hardy at a modern literary party. The story is of such a party, full of gay unimportant chatters, filling the air with news of that superabundant commodity, the great novels that are 'going to be' written. In the corner was a quiet overlooked man, whom one of the party at last approached, demanding what *he* thought of the technique of novel-writing. He replied modestly that he had written a few novels, but really he didn't know much about the theory of the matter. When he was gone the young man learned that this had been Thomas Hardy.

They say that he had a horror of calling attention to himself, and that when he traveled 'Thomas Hardy' never appeared on his luggage, but only 'T. Hardy.'

Certainly 'T. Hardy' would attract little enough attention to a not very distinguished-looking person, traveling probably third class. I once came upon

a man who had met Hardy, and he told me a story, not at all important, but one that somehow made me see Hardy clearly.

The man was a retired naval petty officer, whom I came on by chance, tending the cabbages in his garden in Devonshire. During the war of 1914-1918 he was captured by the Germans in East Africa, and remained a prisoner there for some years. He was one of a considerable party of Englishmen, and they were kept moving about in the forest, sick with malaria, unhappy and unwell. They had one book — Hardy's *Tess*. He did not know whence it had come, but there it was, and every man read it and reread it; and, as year followed year, bits of paper frayed away, chunks of print were obliterated by thumbmarks; pages, stuck together by food, wouldn't come apart without disaster. But, whenever a new prisoner turned up, and was given *the* book, someone could always help him over stiles, reciting the missing bits. 'We all knew it almost by heart,' said the petty officer.

After the war he visited a relative in Dorchester, an innkeeper, with whom he was walking one day, when they met Thomas Hardy. The innkeeper introduced the petty officer to the novelist. 'He was a very simple fellow,' the man said to me. 'He shook hands and said, "You look very ill," and then he went off.'

Later in the day the petty officer was eating his dinner at a farmers' ordinary, and Hardy was sitting there, alone at a table, no one taking any notice of him — nor he, apparently, of anyone.

'Did you tell him about *the* book?' I asked.

He had not done so; but I think the old man would have been pleased with that tale.

'I should like to have seen him,' I said to the petty officer.

'Why?' he asked. 'Was he important?'

II

My three and one-half years as a journalist in Bradford I have called my university career. I was away from family restraints for the first time; I had my own rooms; I had taken up a game — a thing I had never done before; I had the constant companionship of lively minds; I was smoking a lot and drinking a little; I was reading regularly and intelligently. During most of that three and one-half years, I devoted a month at a time to a chosen author. I began with Chaucer, came forward with Spenser, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Dryden, following the stream of poetry up to Wordsworth, Keats, Tennyson, Browning. And so with the novelists. I obtained a sense of the continuity, the development, of English letters. Not that I read nothing in a given month save the chosen author of the month. There were many side lines; but I found this system of reading with continuity very important after years of haphazard absorption. Blessings upon the Everyman's Library, and upon an age in which those volumes could be bought for a shilling each.

My work for the *Yorkshire Observer* was of wide variety. I was in turn reporter, subeditor, and even, at times, editor. Editor, that is, of the weekly edition, during the editor's holidays — a not exacting job, consisting as it did of making a pie out of bits of the daily edition and adding a seasoning of short stories, serials, and articles.

I learned a lot about newspaper work. I did theatre criticisms and even, once or twice, music criticism, though I always protested that this was carrying hypocrisy too far, and at length I was, with gladness, relieved of all contact with an art which I can no more discuss than I can discuss religion.

I did much book-reviewing. The system was simple. Those who wanted to review books could do so, with the book for reward, and no other pay. I wanted to review books very much, and was

enormously encouraged one day by a note from Drysdale, telling me that a review I had written 'would have graced a great London journal.' He allowed me much freedom so far as space was concerned. I have used a whole column of the *Yorkshire Observer* — a matter, in those days, of 1200 or 1500 words — to assess the merits of a single novel. One day I wrote a short review of Mr. T. H. S. Escott's life of Trollope. I thought no more of it than of any other review, but it was one of those things that affect a man's whole future.

And now those years that had so much endeavor and gayety — gayety whether under the winter pall of fog in Bradford or summer's winy air on the moors and in the dales of the West Riding — drew to their ominous end. The crust crumbled under our feet; the war broke up that goodly comradeship; and all too soon 'the loveliest and the best' of them were gone forever.

I did not remain in Bradford long after the war had begun. All sorts of queer activities broke out. I was not at first passed for the army, and found myself one of a group who imagined they were somehow helping our country by shooting on a miniature range. But, with so many friends so quickly gone, it was all very unhappy, very unsatisfactory, and I welcomed a chance to leave the city. I went, in the spring of 1915, to the *Manchester Guardian*, served my apprenticeship there, and then discovered an unheroic niche in the army after all. If we include the three and one-half years when I was absent in France, I served the *Guardian* for fifteen years. These were the most momentous years of my life. I came to know and to love Manchester as I have known and loved no other city. When I began to write books it was natural and inevitable that Manchester should be their focus. I was steeped in the place to the eyebrows. I am still touchy with anyone who runs it down or fails to understand its enormous significance in the life of Britain.

I am often referred to — especially by American writers — as a ‘Manchester man.’ I do not deny it, for I am proud so to be in all that matters — love and, I think I may claim, understanding. From all over the world I receive letters from exiled Mancunians, nostalgic homesick letters, thanking me for giving them the taste and smell of their native city.

Manchester is about as big a city as one can take to one’s heart. I never, in London, had any sense of citizenship or of civic pride.

You couldn’t take a place like that to your heart. I didn’t know who was the chief of our local governing authority. I never saw our Member of Parliament, whoever he may have been, and I do not to this day know in what ecclesiastical diocese we were situated and who was our bishop. Most of the residents went up daily to their work in London; and all round London, making a circle of ever-widening extent, there were similar places which once had been villages and now were God knows what. ‘Londoner,’ in short, was ceasing to have its old meaning. It was becoming increasingly difficult to find a Londoner. What were called Londoners were people who knew the way from some London underground station to the office, knew very little else about London, and hastened home at night to these new raw places which were almost devoid of culture and association. Hardly one of these had a theatre; many had not a church. On the credit side it may be added that they caused to develop an enormous interest in gardening and a fair knowledge of horticulture. But essentially they were without soul or a focus for civic endeavor. The cinema was the highest point of public entertainment, and the golf club the centre of social life.

The same sort of thing was happening about Manchester, but the place had not reached the proportions which are amorphous and destructive of individuality. You could still be a Manchester man in the true sense that you lived in

Manchester and knew, and were interested in, all that appertained to the city’s well-being. I think there can hardly have been a citizen who did not know who was his Lord Mayor and who were the councilors and aldermen representing his civic ward. The Bishop was our bishop and the cathedral was our cathedral, still intimate and familiar enough to be called by many ‘t’owd church.’ We knew our Members of Parliament and watched their ways pretty closely, and expected them to be often among us to give an account of themselves. The *Guardian* was our own great local paper, which, to us, was something more distinguished than a ‘national organ.’ We knew our town clerk and our chief constable; and our university was ours indeed, scintillating with great and well-known names, held in local affection: Miers and Alexander, Tout and Herford. The theatres were ours also, and even the music halls had a domestic and indigenous flavor. In a word, we were a community, keenly aware of the existence in our midst of those men and those institutions which represented our mundane and spiritual and cultural essence and well-being.

Such was the Manchester I went to in 1915, and such, in the main, it is today.

III

The chief reporter of the *Manchester Guardian*, when I joined the staff, was William Haslam Mills. Like the deputy chief, George Leach, Mills was a barrister-at-law. He and Leach had once put up a joint brass plate on some obscure office door in Manchester, but neither made progress in the law. They had long since given up legal ambitions when I knew them. These two men — and Mills in particular — had a great influence upon me.

It was Mills who made the appointment, and it was characteristic of him that his decision was affected by two points which might not have appealed

to other men. Necessarily, when applying for the job, I submitted examples of my work. I made them up on foolscap sheets into three folders labeled 'Descriptive Reports,' 'Theatre Criticism,' 'Book Reviews.' Mills told me afterwards that the neatness of the folders first attracted him, and that he was finally decided by a sentence or two in a review of T. H. S. Escott's book on Trollope.

This was characteristic of the man. He himself was the very picture of neatness. Everything about him was neat. He wrote a beautiful firm neat hand, and so disliked the look of even one erasure that I have seen him more than once rewrite a whole page of copy because he had altered a word on the last line. His clothes were neat, though worn with an air. He always carried a malacca cane, always wore a bow tie or a stock, and in winter always had a muffler twisted about his neck with an effect both careless and considered. He was strikingly good-looking in a histrionic way.

That a phrase in something I had written should have clinched the matter in Mills's mind was characteristic too, for he was a lover of good phrases in others and a maker of them for himself. Slipshod writing was abhorrent to him and was never passed over without reproof. One night he called me into his little room, opening off the reporters' room, and handed me a sheet of copy. 'Look at that!' he said. 'Look at that!' Someone had written: 'Owing to the fact that —' Mills carefully put his pen through it and substituted 'because.' 'Owing to the fact that!' he groaned.

'Tut-tut! Like a mouthful of sand.'

He loved to talk, and he talked as he wrote and as he dressed — with a slightly theatrical affectation. It came off because he knew how to do it; but he was a dangerous model to copy. The office was overrun with dangerous models. Any man who worked there long was in danger of his life as a writer. If you followed Mills you were at the risk, not

having his resources, of developing a style which was all bloom and no peach. If you followed Allan Monkhouse, who had worked out a monkish style from which adjectives were banished as sins and adverbs as backslidings, the result might easily be all stone and no plum; and C. E. Montague was the most dangerous of all. Monkhouse once told me that Montague had said to him that a good writer should be aware of an improvement in his style every month — which goes a long way towards explaining why I, at any rate, can never read a Montague novel without being aware of the incessant clicking of the brain behind the pen. In my golfing days I used to play, most Monday mornings, with a parson who, on every tee, murmured half-aloud: 'Eye on the ball. Don't press. Slow back — steady — swing!' so that I was constrained to cry in agony one day, 'For God's sake, stop studying golf and *play* it!' Not thus, I felt, did Braid and Vardon soar to the heights; and not, I feel now and ever shall feel, by style obsession shall a writer enter into the kingdom. Preoccupation with the rules of the game there must be; but it should no more show when the game is in progress than bread and beef show in a muscular arm lifting a weight.

The *Guardian* was perhaps a little style-mad; and that, one may at least say, is better than the gay carefree sanity that produces 'owing to the fact that' and avoids repetition of the word 'potato' by writing 'the aforesaid tuber' — another circumlocution which one day afflicted Haslam Mills to the soul.

Mills, more than any other man in the office, affected the direction of my own writing at that time. To 'write like Mills' seemed to me to be the thing to aim at; and, at that time and in the circumstances, a very good thing, too. How excellently he himself could use his resources may be judged from a book called *Grey Pastures*, which he published through Chatto and Windus. It is a series of short studies of the people he

knew, and the conditions in which they lived, during his boyhood in Ashton-under-Lyne, and it reproduces the atmosphere of provincial Liberalism and nonconformity with a tender and whimsical appreciation that I have not known equaled. It is *Thrums* without treacle.

Mills was still there as chief reporter when I came back from the war. C. P. Scott had declined to guarantee my job, but Mills had said, 'If the paper's still here, and if I am still here, you shall come back.' He was as good as his word.

When he left us it was to take a post with a Ministry in London. On his last Sunday night in the office, I happened to be reporter on late duty. On a weekday that was a dull job enough — hanging about for what might happen; but on a Sunday it was lugubrious and depressing to an inconceivable extent. Manchester yawned with blackness and emptiness. It was a moment, above all others, to stay in the office and talk, if Mills could be induced to talk. He sat in his little cabinet of a room, I in the big, desolate reporters' room; and as he now and then passed through I could divine in him the excitement and melancholy of that farewell moment. He was no longer a young man; he had served the paper from his youth up; and now he was engaged in that saddest of tasks: sorting, burning, running through drawers and desks in which the years had accumulated their significant and reminding trifles. At last he came out into the room and announced: 'I shall go in and say good-bye to Mr. Scott.' Most of the men in the office would have said 'the Old Man'; but Mills, in speech, preserved always an almost Arthurian punctiliousness.

This moment of going in to say good-bye to Mr. Scott must have been to him, to whom the paper was a religion and the editor its prophet, a high moment; and he was a man who instinctively dramatized even moments that were not particularly distinguished. I went on with my reading in that dreary reporters' room, with the uncurtained windows

giving upon the black Manchester night, and awaited his return. He was back sooner than I had expected him, and he looked stricken. He was without George Leach's skepticism, his ability to clothe a bad moment in a cynical disregard. His face always betrayed him. He came up to my desk and said: 'He didn't even say, "We're sorry to lose you, Mr. Mills." He shook hands and said, "I think you're making a wise decision."' Mills then turned in his quick eager way and went back to his own little room, where he sat for a long time in silence and solitude. I think he felt it hard to take up his stick and hat and do all that now remained to be done — walk out of the office which he had served for so long with a rare devotion and distinction. A few words might have made it easier for him, but they were not spoken.

By the time I myself appeared in London, death had taken Mills off too early: a brilliant journalist; a character of great originality, if lacking a little in the qualities that we mean by force; to me, a friend and mentor whose memory has forever a seat by my private hearth. On the title page of a book he wrote about the *Manchester Guardian* he placed these words by Edmund Burke: 'To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth; so to be patriots as not to forget we are gentlemen.' That was Mills's conception not only of the patriot but also of the journalist.

IV

When I was engaged by Haslam Mills to serve the *Manchester Guardian* he handed me over to George Leach, and as we were returning from the Thatched House inn too long afterwards, Leach remarked that there now remained nothing to be done save the laying on of hands. Thus he admirably crystallized the sacerdotal relationship in which C. P. Scott liked to stand to his staff.

It would be pleasant to be able to join

my voice with many voices which have praised the virtues of this great editor, and, indeed, I can do so freely and with conviction insofar as it is of the editor I speak. But I never liked the man. 'Scarcely,' says Saint Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, 'scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.' Scott was righteousness incarnate, and this I say not as a sneer but as a simple statement of fact concerning the man as I knew him. Righteousness, in all conscience, is a quality so rare that only a fool would make its ascription a sneer. But it has been my own lot in life, because that is how I am constructed, to be moved more readily by human feeling than by intellectual assent; and Scott lacked more completely than most men I have known the human touch that turns a partisan into a devotee. I cannot think of a man that I would die for; but, in any list of possibles, C. P. Scott's name would be near the bottom.

Saint Paul is right in this analysis of the qualities which attach man to man. Even so dry and unemotional a spectator of the human scene as Mr. Somerset Maugham backs Saint Paul's opinion. Having examined, and turned down as of little worth, most of what we prize in men and things, he pronounces in *The Summing Up* for 'lovingkindness' as the quality that preëminently gives significance and beauty to human relationships.

I was once paying a half-term visit to my boys' school, and E. T. Scott, C. P. Scott's son, was there. The boys of the school came up and talked to us with the unrivaled freedom of modern youth, and E. T. Scott said to me: 'I like that, you know. I like the way these youngsters talk to their elders nowadays. But, my word, I wouldn't have dared to talk to *my* father like that!'

This seemed to me a revealing moment. Grant, if you like, that what was in question was not the attitude of an individual but of a whole generation; but

it was C. P. Scott's generation, and in him the authoritarian and autocratic qualities of the generation were hardened to an unusual degree.

He lacked the common touch — which makes a good or bad epitaph as you read it. When my second son was born, my wife was desperately ill, and when the boy was a few months old the two had to be parted. My wife was sent away into the country, and the child was put out to nurse in a Manchester institution, while I lived with the other child under the hospitable roof of my colleague Leach, to whom I say now that the kindness of himself and his wife is never forgotten in this household. Before my child could be admitted to the institution, some guarantee was demanded as to the respectability and status of the parents. I asked C. P. Scott if he would provide me with this, and he did so readily. But thereafter, although I had occasion to see him almost daily, he never once inquired how my wife and child were progressing; he showed no apprehension whatever of the anxieties of a man passing through one of the darkest times of his life. Pardonably, perhaps, my mind automatically recalls the incident in assessing his human worth.

Scott was never guilty of spending money with vulgar ostentation. A relay of journalists of the most distinguished ability passed through the office in my time, all leaving in quest of better pay. There was a reason for Scott's attitude. I have been told that, when he inherited from his relative, John Edward Taylor, the paper which he had already edited for many years, the property was burdened with debt. In clearing off that load, he made never one concession to the growing demand for a 'popular' paper — that is to say, a paper that fell below his own magnificent conception of what a newspaper should be. I can admire that struggle, and the resolute adherence to principle behind it, all the more because his conception of what

constitutes a great newspaper is mine also; and to this day the *Manchester Guardian* is the one paper I would not be without. It reaches me by post, sometimes a day, sometimes two days, late; and I know no higher tribute that can be paid to a daily newspaper than this: that one can read it with pleasure and profit two days after publication. Scott's great work remains.

These facts should not be forgotten in assessing this side of Scott's character. It was a righteous struggle, and he won it; but it left him oversensitive to petty cash.

The ambition of all proper young men on the *Manchester Guardian* was to write that first column on the last page known as 'the back-pager.' We were paid three guineas a time, and were glad enough to get it. On one occasion, returning from a prolonged stay in Ireland as the *Guardian's* representative, I wrote a back-pager on an Irish topic. When the cheque for it reached me, there was enclosed a note in C. P. Scott's firm handwriting, pointing out that the office had been paying my expenses during the time when I accumulated the experience which made the back-pager possible; 'and this being so,' the note proceeded, 'I suggest that we go fifty-fifty.' The cheque was for a guinea and a half. No one could quarrel with the justice of such a decision, but it did not help me to love the man who made it, nor did it inspire in my heart a zeal to serve him well. Whatever I wrote for the paper, so long as Haslam Mills was there, I wrote in the hope that it would please him rather than that it would please Scott.

What may have been the fate of others I do not know; but, for myself, during the eleven years of my service to the paper I never knew whether my work pleased Scott or not. On no occasion did he either say or write a word of commendation or dispraise. For all the human appreciation there was, one might

as well have been working for a marble statue. Month after month, and in the long run, year after year, I was in relationship with Scott the editor; but not once did he show even the flicker of an understanding of human need. I cannot recall a word — not so much as a comment on the weather, a topic which in Manchester provides ample opening — that was not concerned with the paper's routine.

The last work I did for the *Manchester Guardian* was in connection with that general election which destroyed the Labor Party and created the 'National' Government. The articles I wrote then brought me letters of appreciation from journalists and private persons in many parts of England, in the United States, and on the Continent of Europe. The one region which was dumb was the editorial department of the *Manchester Guardian*. C. P. Scott had then, in theory, ceased to be editor, and had been succeeded by his son Edward. But the 'old man' continued to attend the office, and there were few who believed that he was not editor still in all but name. Neither the *de facto* nor the *de jure* editor broke the silence.

I resigned, writing a brief note which contained no more than the intimation that I should cease to be a member of the *Manchester Guardian* staff in a month's time. I was told later that this caused some offense; and of course it was customary to express regret at going, pride at having been associated with a great editor and a great paper. But I make no concealment that I was in a hurt and bitter mood. I remembered Haslam Mills saying to me years before: 'He didn't even say, "We're sorry you're going, Mr. Mills."' My pride at having served the *Guardian* for so long was, in fact, great and will not diminish; but I should have been prouder of having worked for C. P. Scott if his prophetic soul had shown deeper symptoms of kinship with a human heart.

ARCHITECTS OF DEFENSE

BY ALBERT KAHN

I

'WE HAVE just been awarded a contract for airplanes — which means we'll need 400,000 to 500,000 square feet of additional floor space within three months. Can it be done?' came a telephone message from the Glenn L. Martin Company in Baltimore.

'It can,' was our reply. 'We'll be in your office tomorrow morning.'

Four of us tackled the problem the morning of our arrival in Baltimore, and within six hours several studies were ready to submit. They were approved by the owners that day. Within another twenty-four hours the structural steel drawings were ready, and with these in hand bids were called on a pound price. The contract was placed immediately for five weeks' delivery — actually the steel came through in four. Meantime, further work on the plans was carried on at our home office in Detroit. One contract after another was placed, and in just eleven weeks from the day of that phone call the building was turned over to the owners ready for occupancy.

That, however, was in 1939 when building materials were plentiful, contractors were hungry for work, and labor was easily available. In the emergency of 1942 even greater speed is demanded in spite of priority rulings, union regulations, and the scarcity of skilled labor and materials. This means work night and day — it means racing against time. Never in the history of the country has so vast an amount of industrial building been under way. The

government-established forty-hour week has gone by the boards. It is now the sixty-hour week with time and one-half for all work over forty hours and, in many instances, double time. And still jobs are undermanned. At that, the impossible is being accomplished. Within a few more months, millions and millions of additional square feet of floor space will be available for turning out material.

It should be remembered that much of the work to be done is new to the manufacturer: automobile manufacturers undertake the building of tanks, guns, or airplanes; rubber and paint companies, munitions; chemical concerns, the manufacture of shells. The first thing to be determined is the process: tentative layouts are discussed and a definite scheme is agreed upon. When the process and machinery layouts are established, the architect is called in. He determines the type of building best suited to the problem, the plan, the proper column spacings, the clearances necessary for conveyers, cranes, and the like, whether the daylighted or windowless plant is to be adopted, how and where raw materials are to enter, and where the completed product is to emerge for shipment. At the same time, study is given to the employees' facilities — locker rooms, lunch rooms, cafeterias, toilet rooms, first aid and employment departments.

Even without a definite knowledge of the site, sketch plans can be prepared of the railway sidings, employees' entrances, the administration building,

heating plant, garage, foundry, forge shop, oil storage, and parking lot. During the period of negotiations the structural problems are given a preliminary test, careful consideration being given to what materials are available and can best be employed. Many structural steel shapes are difficult to obtain at present. To await special rollings would mean months of delay. Therefore the stock lists are scanned for material which is at hand.

While fabrication of the structural steel is proceeding, the architectural as well as the mechanical working drawings and specifications are developed. Contracts for the general excavation, and sometimes for the foundations up to grade as well, are next placed, so that all may be ready for the erection of steel the moment it arrives. Contracts for the balance of the work follow, preferably placed under one general contract, though frequently the contracts for the mechanical trades, such as plumbing, heating, electrical work, and others, are let separately. Finally, a construction time schedule is drawn up in consultation with the contractors. All such preliminary work is well along when the final 'go ahead' is received from Washington.

II

Now begins the race against time. The structural steel contract is the first to be placed, for this is the bottleneck in most building projects today. It is often let within a few days on a pound price basis.

Let me give you one example of speedy work — the new Buick plant for the manufacture of airplane motors in Melrose Park, Illinois. The general contract was placed on March 15 last year, a Saturday. On Monday morning, with the ground still covered with snow and frost several feet deep, excavating machines began operations. The main building has a ground floor area of approximately 1,000,000 square feet and a

basement of 320,000 square feet. Attached to the main factory is a three-story and basement office building with a total of 56,400 square feet. In the rear of the plant are forty-five dynamometer test cells, one for propeller tests, all of exceedingly difficult construction. In addition there are the personnel building, the heating plant, a master substation, a parking lot, and other adjuncts. The excavation began on March 17, 1941, and the building was substantially complete by the end of September — that is, six months from the day the contract was placed. An ordinary eight-room residence usually takes that long to build!

Here is a case where figures will talk: It required 10,000 tons of structural steel, 5,500,000 cubic feet of excavation, 1,200,000 cubic feet of reinforced concrete, 2500 tons of reinforcing steel, 145,000 panes of glass in 186,000 square feet of steel sash. There are 79,000 lineal feet, or nearly 15 miles, of heating pipes, 575 motor-driven fans for ventilation; 75 miles of electric conduit; 250 miles of electric wire and cable; 9500 fluorescent light fixtures, each four to five feet long. Three hundred thousand pounds of copper were required for power wiring alone. Ten transformer substations and a master substation supply 30,000 kw. for power and light. There are 38 toilet rooms, 172 wash fountains, and 60 drinking fountains. Eight thousand lineal feet of railroad siding had to be constructed. There are 13,000 lockers for men and women, for three shifts have been installed; also a cafeteria to seat 2000 at one sitting, and additional lunch rooms for 1200. A paved parking area for 3500 cars has been built. The necessary concrete roads constructed around the plant are equivalent to a twenty-foot strip, six miles long.

This is but one of the new buildings for aviation; many of them are much larger. Not less than 40,000,000 square feet, or over 900 acres, of additional floor space are under construction or have been completed for this industry alone.

A government project, the Chrysler Tank Arsenal, went up in record time. In September 1940 this company was awarded a contract for one thousand 28-ton tanks. A new plant was necessary. The site selected was a cornfield some twelve miles from the centre of Detroit. The structure decided upon was 500 feet by 1300 feet, approximately three blocks long. Work on the foundations was begun late in September 1940. The winter weather was a handicap; yet the main structure, heating plant, administration, personnel building, garage and parking lot were ready for occupancy in April 1941, again within six months' time. Today tanks are rolling out of this plant in large numbers, with production increasing daily.

III

The opportunity to build from scratch is bound to produce innovations. New, for instance, is the trend today to erect plants in outlying districts where ample land is available and future expansion possible. New also are the so-called windowless plants. With fluorescent lighting recently developed and air conditioning now quite reliable, certain advantages are rightfully claimed for them. They make for simpler and speedier construction and provide a uniformity of light and temperature scarcely possible in the daylighted plants. With manufacturing carried on twenty-four hours a day as at present, the cost of operation is probably no higher. When we return to the normal eight-hour day, however, this is likely to prove otherwise. Accordingly manufacturers who are building their own plants and expect to meet severe competition later adhere in the main to the older type. Many question the effect upon workers of being entirely shut off from daylight. This, however, only experience can determine. The Government is inclined to favor the windowless building because of possible blackouts.

An innovation lately employed in numerous plants is the placing of locker rooms, lunch rooms, and toilets in excavated basements off wide passageways from which workers enter and leave the plant. Numerous stairways lead to the factory floor above. This arrangement avoids much objectionable travel in the work aisles of the main plant, affords lounging space for the different shifts and, what is particularly important, places these utilities where they will never interfere with future expansion. Furthermore, these excavated basements of heavy reinforced concrete construction will serve as bomb shelters if needed. Where this is not feasible the Government requires that provision be made for connections with underground shelters.

We are likely to forget that the modern plant is the product of only forty years. Prior to 1900, what were most of our manufacturing plants? Groups of isolated buildings with little relation to one another, no farseeing general plan, each structure built for a certain particular work with little if any arrangement for expansion. The so-called New England mill type, consisting of uniformly spaced masonry piers with windows between and heavy timber construction inside, had served as an early model. Protected by the sprinkler system, an invaluable American invention, this construction proved to be a great advance over the earlier buildings of heavy masonry walls and few windows, wood or cast iron columns, wood joists and floors—a highly inflammable combination.

Then came the automobile. The automobile industry required larger floor areas, free of columns, than were possible in standard mill construction. The builder turned to the use of steel columns and girders with heavy plank floors. But this meant increased cost and heavier insurance rates because unprotected steel is more easily destroyed by fire than heavy timber. At just the

right moment reinforced concrete came to the rescue. It had been in use in Europe where labor was cheap. It had been tried in this country — with little encouragement at first because it was slow to construct and required greater care in building. Furthermore, reinforced concrete met with stiff opposition from the steel industry, which feared the appearance of a formidable rival.

The automobile manufacturers quickly saw the advantages of the new construction. It was very rigid, free from vibration, capable of carrying heavy loads; it provided maximum glass areas with a minimum of masonry; above all, it was as nearly fireproof as possible. Furthermore, it was easy of maintenance, reasonable in cost, and attractive in appearance. Presently other manufacturers followed. Most manufacturing buildings of the kind were from four to six stories high, seventy-five or eighty feet wide, with usually sixty-foot courts between. To make use of the full ground floor area — always the most valuable space — these courts were often covered with glass.

An important change took place about 1920. It was introduced by Henry Ford, who is responsible for so many innovations in factory design and operation. After erecting innumerable multiple-story buildings throughout the country, Ford came to the conclusion that they were uneconomical, that the time wasted in raising and lowering materials was a mistake. He promptly abandoned his multiple-story buildings, erecting in their place one-story steel structures with occasional portions two stories high, and putting as many departments as possible under one roof. With greatly enlarged floor areas, free of columns, operations were more economical, supervision was more efficient, and the expansion of departments, when needed, much simpler.

Mr. Ford has never hesitated to do the unusual. Consider his new Press Shop at River Rouge, Michigan, a two-

story structure with the ground floor used for the storage of materials. Presses, some of them weighing 500 tons, were placed on the second floor, which is reserved entirely for manufacture. I know of no one else who would have dared this plan. The second-floor construction is of three-quarter-inch solid steel plates secured to steel girders; this support was essential if the presses were to be moved as the new operations demanded. The building is approximately 3000 feet long and required some 27,000 tons of structural steel. Erected on poor soil, it required another 25,000 tons of steel piling to carry, in addition to the loads of the building itself, a three-foot concrete mat over a large area which in turn supported the heavy presses.

Multiple-story manufacturing buildings are now rare except in urban districts where land areas are proscribed, or where special processes require them. Most of the new emergency plants are of the one-story type. In industrial planning it is important that the building be as far as possible uniform in construction, so that departments may be easily moved from one place to another. Adjuncts such as powerhouses, foundries, forge shops, and the like must be placed so as not to interfere with future growth.

An important New England tool manufacturing company recently abandoned a plant of some thirty-two buildings, built at different times and scattered over an enormous area; scarcely two floors were on the same level; bridges connected some, others were quite isolated. Today this company operates all departments in a new building, all under one roof, and produces more than double the former output in the same floor area. Needless to say, the cost of manufacture is considerably reduced, for the company now has an orderly arrangement. Raw materials are delivered at the proper place by both rail and truck, and travel a carefully planned route for machining, sub-assembly, and final assembly,

to the point where the finished product is boxed and shipped.

IV

Structural steel permits of large spans and makes possible column spacings limited only by the cost involved. Every manufacturer will agree that the fewer the supporting columns the more serviceable the plant, the easier the placing of machinery and production lines. Every column wastes (counting necessary clearances) not less than eight or ten square feet of floor space — a considerable total in a large plant. Probably the widest area under one roof, without a column in it, is that in the Glenn L. Martin plant at Baltimore for the assembly of giant planes. It is 300 by 700 feet. The room would house four football fields. Trusses 30 feet high, placed 40 feet above the floor, span from one side to the other. Ample daylight is introduced through the roof monitors. Two-hundred-foot spans are common today.

In some of our new plants we have used the so-called monitor beam construction. In this, the supporting beams follow the outline of the roof monitors. The beams are notched with a burner, removing one flange and the web of the beam. The beam is then bent to shape, stiffened by inserted transverse plates at the points of bend when necessary, and welded according to the calculated stresses. This construction makes for an attractive interior, since it avoids the many-membered trusses ordinarily used, increases overhead daylight, and simplifies upkeep and maintenance. The scheme is applicable up to certain spans, beyond which any beam construction would be uneconomical.

To keep the roof loads as light as possible, steel decking, gypsum plank, and cement tile are largely used; for the floors, concrete which is often covered with wood blocks laid in mastic. Except in windowless buildings, glass areas as

large as possible are generally employed with provisions both inside and out for easy cleaning. To avoid glare, and also to absorb much of the sun's heat, special glass is largely used.

Heating and artificial lighting present problems susceptible of different solutions. Low-pressure steam, hot water, hot air, or a combination may supply the heat. For the factory portion we generally rely on so-called unit heaters, and for the office section on steam and hot water radiation. The factory portion is usually heated to 60°, with the offices 70° in zero weather. Proper ventilation is equally imperative. While artificial air cooling is on the increase, it is as yet used only in a limited way. In windowless plants, and in certain departments where uniformity of temperature and humidity is essential, air cooling and heating are automatically controlled.

Today fluorescent lighting is widely employed because it closely resembles daylight. From 40 to 50 foot-candles per square foot are easily possible. Ample power wiring must be provided and must be so designed to permit quick changes when departmental rearrangements require them.

Parking facilities are a necessary adjunct to modern factory buildings. With many of these in outlying districts, the workers use motorcars to reach them, four or five men joining in the use of one car. This will be increasingly true with tire restrictions. Provision for five or six thousand cars is common in large plants. Since approximately 200 square feet per car are required, a parking area of 1,000,000 square feet is not infrequent.

Last but not least, we come to the external appearance of the modern plant. Strictest economy must prevail in manufacturing buildings, especially in National Defense projects. Therefore elimination of non-essentials and of everything not purely utilitarian is imperative. The very observance of this requirement, however, often makes for

successful design. As a rule, the most direct and straightforward solution produces the best-looking structure. More buildings suffer from too much ornamentation than from too little. Just as the mere clothing of the skeleton of a modern airplane by designers with an eye for line and a sense of fitness produces an object of beauty, so the frank expression of the functional, the structural, element of the industrial building makes for success. External beauty — at least in industry — is the result of good planning, grouping, and proportion. None of these need add to the cost of the structure. Size in itself is an important element in design fully recognized by the architect. Occasionally a client is particularly solicitous about the appearance of his factory, and occasionally it proves difficult to dissuade him from building a classic temple.

V

What is to become of these vast projects after the emergency? This is a question frequently asked. The answer, in the writer's opinion, is this: With the emergency past, these plants will be called upon to carry on. The country will not again make the mistake it did after the past war, dropping all defense work. We shall no doubt continue to have a standing army. This will require replacements and new equipment continuously. The Government may decide to operate many of the new plants, probably not on a twenty-four-hour but on the normal eight-hour basis, or it may employ those now operating them to continue. Very wisely these new plants are of the most modern type and of permanent construction — quite different from the temporary structures erected during the First World War and since destroyed or replaced. Those not used by the Government will probably be sold to private concerns. There is little doubt that with the return to normal conditions this country must supply many goods to the devastated countries

abroad. Not only the plants erected during this emergency, but many new ones, will be required. This may seem an overoptimistic view, but the writer feels very sanguine on this point.

The present emergency is teaching the industrial architect and engineer how to plan swiftly, exactly, and with foresight. It has demonstrated beyond question the advantages of building in such a way that expansion is easily possible, of placing as many departments as practical under one roof, of eliminating dividing walls, and of keeping the construction uniform.

New materials and new processes have been speedily developed — various types of glass for heat resistance and the prevention of glare; plastics; new forms of clay tile which make for speedier and more economical wall construction; acoustic materials for deadening noise; various insulating materials which conserve heat; and more economical methods of ventilation and air conditioning. It is heartening to see the eagerness with which these new materials have been adopted. We also give thanks for the more lenient building codes, for earlier codes have needlessly increased building costs and delayed construction.

A sizable problem was met and fairly dealt with in the selection of contractors. By pooling the personnel and equipment of several large firms, results have been achieved which were never before possible. This was first attempted in the construction of Boulder Dam, where six companies joined forces and completed the work two years ahead of schedule. It was later adopted by the Bureau of Yards and Docks in building the many naval bases in the Atlantic and Pacific, and has since been used in many other projects. This plan has produced a closer coöperation between the designing engineer and the contractors. Here, then, are the innovations and the coöperation which will surely play an important part in the blueprint of the future.

POLITICS IN FRANKLIN STREET

BY PHILIP GOODMAN

I

ONE night at dinner my father furnished us with a surprise. Calmly, almost disinterestedly, he said, 'They want me to run for Congress in the next election.'

From the expression my mother betrayed I could see that she disapproved.

'I hope you won't get mixed up in politics,' she said.

My father made no reply, but took from a small side plate an ear of corn, which he buttered and salted, and then proceeded to handle as if it were a mouth organ. After running the scales back and forth, he put it down, wiped his mouth with an exaggerated formality, and said, 'The great Plato tells us that the penalty superior men pay for taking no interest in politics is to live under the rule of inferior men.'

'That's from the *Georgics*,' I bluffed, knowing no more about it than did he.

'Exactly,' he said.

'Plato,' my mother repeated. 'Wasn't he the brother-in-law or something of Socrates?'

'Exactly,' my father said.

'Wasn't he killed by Brutus?' my mother asked.

'The mystery of his death,' my father explained, 'has never been cleared up.'

'How,' I asked, for at eighteen I was thick in Grote's *History*, 'could he have been killed by a man who lived four hundred years later?'

Looking at me sternly, my father replied, 'I believe I just told you that the

mystery of his death had never been cleared up.'

Nothing ever pleased me more than to get my father into a tight corner, especially when he would try to turn dismay into triumph. I followed up my advantage by saying that Socrates met death by his own hand in drinking a cup of hemlock; that the circumstances of his death were as well known as the circumstances of Cæsar's death. Did he want better evidence than was to be found in his own Plato?

'I'm afraid, my son,' he said, 'you don't understand the vagaries of evidence. Only the other day I read of a case in court where the testimony of two witnesses differed so widely that the jury couldn't make up their mind whether a man had been run over by a horse or a horse by a man. And yet you take Plato's word as a conclusive fact!'

My mother, who hated any kind of controversy at the table, came to my father's assistance, saying, 'After all, none of us were there to see it, were we?'

'I wasn't,' I cheerfully admitted.

'And I wasn't,' my mother said laughingly.

My father didn't speak, but went on eating.

'Were you?' I asked him.

'Was I what?' he said, suddenly looking up.

'Present at Socrates' death.'

'I don't believe so.'

'But you're not certain.'

'I'm not certain of anything.'

'Are you certain you're alive?'

'Don't try to work that old catch on me. Of course I'm certain I'm alive.'

'You won't be very long,' my mother said, 'if you go on eating corn that way. You don't half chew it!'

'Corn's only fit for chickens, anyway,' he said.

'Why do you eat it, then?' I asked.

He drew himself up importantly, turned to me, and, in a manner that seemed to be conferring some great favor, said, 'Would you really like to know why I eat corn?'

I said that I would, without being in the least curious.

'Very well then, my son,' he said, 'you shall know. I eat corn *because I like it!*'

'Let's get back to Socrates,' I suggested.

'The hell with Socrates,' he said, taking up another ear of corn and buttering it fondly.

We continued our dinner peacefully. When things had been cleared away and my mother had brought on the large bowl of fruit and nuts, over which he would linger endlessly, I asked, 'Which party wants to nominate you?'

'You ought to have more sense than to ask that,' he said. 'There's only *one* party — don't you know that?'

'I thought there were two,' I said, one topic being as good as another for dinner-table controversy.

'You thought wrong,' was his reply. 'The only party is the party of Lincoln, the party of prosperity, the party of the full dinner pail — the Republican Party!'

'Huh-huh,' I said.

When he had left the table my mother winked at me and, under her breath, said, 'Just another one of his brainstorms.'

II

Nothing further was heard about running for Congress till one night a few weeks later when, again at dinner, my

father revived the subject. He said he hadn't been able to make up his mind — not that he had any fear of the outcome, for a nomination meant election almost to a certainty.

'There are a lot of Democrats, don't forget,' I said.

'Most of them are in jail,' he replied, with no bounds to his prejudice. Yet this prejudice was not just a personal one, but a political infatuation of that day that was characteristic of our street, our ward, our town, and our state. Democrats were simply criminals who hadn't yet been caught.

'Would we,' my mother ventured timidly, 'would we have to live in Washington?'

'Part of the year, yes,' my father said.

'How long?' she asked.

'As long as we're in session,' he said. 'It all depends on how much business we have to dispose of.'

The 'we' could not have escaped my mother any more than it had escaped me. Already in the reality of fancy, which is adequately real for people like my father, he was a Congressman, being addressed as 'Honorable,' being sought after for jobs and favors, being invited to spread after-dinner wit at banquets and patriotic jabber at soldiers' monuments on Decoration Day. Perhaps in the height, depth, and width of this fancy he saw himself granting reprieves and issuing pardons; perhaps he even saw himself as commander-in-chief of the army and navy, empowered to declare war and negotiate peace. In any case, there he sat, munching dreamily at his almonds and raisins, the while riding up Pennsylvania Avenue on a white charger.

'Then you've decided to accept?' my mother asked.

'Practically,' said my father.

My mother began to make plans. Washington would not be a strange city to her; born and brought up in Baltimore, she had, as a young girl, made many visits to the Capital; in fact, she had a sister living there, besides a good

many friends. Nevertheless, she contemplated the move with regret.

But she was not unreasonable and she was not impractical; if Washington called, she would answer; if Washington was my father's goal, his life's ambition, she would interpose no obstacles. Her place was by his side, and no one recognized the responsibility more clearly than she herself.

Yet she made stipulations. She would *not* live at a hotel, where you had to tip at every turn, even for a glass of ice water. We would rent a modest house, furnished, and take along Irish Mary, giving her the help of a local colored girl for 'upstairs work' and waiting on the table, and, of course, a laundress to come in once a week. My father agreed.

And she didn't intend to go out and buy a lot of clothes.

'If people don't like the way I dress, you know what they can do,' she said, mincing no words about it.

To this my father did *not* agree, and it must be said that he was entirely in the right.

He knew, as my mother probably did not, that the Washington Season, as it affected a Congressman, meant a round of dinners and receptions at embassies, at the residences of Senators, Supreme Court justices, and Cabinet members, at the homes of influential wire-pullers. And then there were the state functions at the White House, most important of all, for they virtually were command appearances.

'What would the President think,' my father asked, with an appeal to her pride and her reason, 'if he saw you in that old velvet thing you wear to the opera?'

'I don't care what he'd think,' she said, defiantly. 'I'm not going to get myself up like a clotheshorse to please the President.'

Undoubtedly she meant it.

All he could say, at the end of his patience, was 'I swear, you talk like the wife of a Democrat!'

III

From time to time, that winter and the following spring, the Washington prospect was discussed frequently — always, it seemed, at dinner. Gradually, out of what at first was vagueness, came a defined and calculated plan, as of a near-approaching situation to be faced. There even was talk of their taking a trip to Washington to look over certain residential neighborhoods and determine the rentals of houses that would fit their requirements — or, put differently, to determine how great a show they could make for the rental they could afford. But nothing was said about my mother's wardrobe; nothing needed to be said, for my father and I noticed ladies' fashion magazines lying about, magazines that never before had been brought into the house. One day on her bureau I saw ten or twelve little groups of swatches of silks, satins, and velvets, each group containing a range of shades, and remarked on their beauty.

'Whom are they for?' I asked, playing curious and dumb.

'You'll see,' was all she cared to say.

My mother wrote to her sister in Washington telling of the wonderful news, and asked that she keep an eye out for a suitable house, something that would be in keeping with the station of a Congressman from an important district of an important state. Not long afterwards my aunt was able to inform us that she had found what she considered 'a most attractive home' on Connecticut Avenue, comprising thirty-three rooms and six baths, with a stable in the rear, formerly occupied by the Bulgarian Embassy.

My mother was indignant. She said, 'What does she think we'd do with thirty-three rooms, the fool!'

'We could take just the stable,' my father said, momentarily regaining the humor which his political aspirations had seemed to destroy.

In the day of which I speak, 1903, there were no primary elections: nominations came, not out of the ballot box, but out of the vest pockets of leaders, styled 'The Committee.' This Committee alone was in the driver's seat; it alone did the steering. But it did more: it formulated the strategy and worked out the tactics of electioneering; it collected and disbursed campaign funds; and it had complete control of patronage. This system, in all its phases, was known as 'The Machine.' It was the era, as we are often reminded today, when there was real democracy in America, by God! Somewhere in the spheres Demos was debauching.

One of the members of the Republican Committee in our town was Billy Carroll, less well known as William Aloysius Carroll. He was the right-hand man of the chairman of the committee, the Boss Himself, the Big Bashaw — in short, the Works, the Honorable (why he was called 'Honorable' when he held no public office I don't know), the Honorable Ignatius Xavier Hurley, better known as Czar Hurley, and still better known as 'Three-fingers' Hurley, a nickname that had been affectionately attached to him since his apprentice days in a butcher's shop when, so the story went, he had two fingers chopped off by his employer for monkeying with the cash drawer. If Czar Hurley, as a politician, could steal the amount he stole with only eight fingers, think of the good fortune of our town that he didn't have ten!

My father's nomination, then, was really up to Hurley; and Billy Carroll, with a wink and a nod of the head, said, 'It's all fixed.'

That was all my father needed to know: if he heard it from Billy's lips it was as good as hearing it from Hurley himself. Billy was his lifelong friend; they had gone to grammar school together, were members of the same boat club, and once went off to Canada, just the two of them, to hunt lions, rhinocer-

oses, hippopotamuses, and whiskey, if not too young. Billy said, 'It's all fixed.'

Admittedly, this was a relief both to my father and to my mother, for, though they had felt seven-eighths certain right along, there was nothing like certainty being made doubly certain.

It was very curious, I thought, and told my father so, that Hurley, whom he knew but slightly, should give him the nomination.

'Maybe he expects a fight in this congressional district and wants the strongest candidate he can get,' my father said, with no trace of a blush that I could detect.

'Whatever the reason,' said my mother, 'it's finally settled now, and I'll have to get busy with my clothes.'

'You have plenty of time,' I said.

'No,' she reasoned, 'summer's the best time. If I wait till fall every dress-maker will be busy. Besides, they're cheaper in the summer.'

Over his nuts and raisins, paying no attention to what we were saying, my father was smiling to himself, moving his lips as if orating, with an occasional expressive raising of the brow.

'What are you thinking about?' my mother asked him.

'Nothing,' he answered, to put her off.

'He's going over his maiden speech,' I said laughingly.

He made no reply to this, but only smiled benignly and with extreme satisfaction. After a little while he asked, 'What is that thing of Patrick Henry's — you know — "Caesar had his Brutus —"'

"Charles the First his Cromwell —"

'That's it!' he interrupted. 'I never can think of that second pair.'

He resumed his smile, and his nuts and raisins.

'Won't you be nervous when you get up to speak in front of all those other Congressmen?' my mother asked.

'It's too late to turn back now,' he answered.

IV

The nightly dinner talk turned to only one topic or to one of the many phases of the topic: my father's explaining of how he was arranging his business so that his absence in Washington would not be too greatly felt; my mother's complaining of how dressmakers' disappointments — indeed, their reckless disregard of promises — were taking all the pleasure and anticipation and excitement out of this whole business of going to Washington; my father's describing of the cut of his new dress suit (which my mother said he didn't need, having got a new one only the year before); my mother's lamenting of the long, fatiguing fittings that almost daily had to be suffered — and so on and so on, *ad infinitum*.

One night I mentioned that I had seen in the papers that Owen Fitzpatrick had got the Democratic nomination.

'His name will be Dennis Fitzpatrick when I get through with him,' my father said.

'Isn't it time they were announcing your nomination?' I asked.

'Oh, I leave that to the boys downtown,' he said. 'They know what they're doing.'

My mother's seven new dresses — four of them evening gowns — came to more than four hundred dollars. My father winced a little, but said nothing, probably realizing that he himself was the author of the splurge.

One night that fall — it must have been several weeks after election — my mother tried on all seven of the dresses for my father and me. We sat up in her bedroom and she would appear, coming from the adjoining room, like a professional model, showing one creation after another. We had seen the dresses before, as they were delivered, but had

not yet seen them on her. As she came into the room each time we, the audience, would applaud long and loud, and she, trying hard to complete the fun of the moment, would smile, but her smiles were sad, with no mirth in them.

The most expensive gown of the lot she saved for the last. It was a silver metal affair, cut very low fore and aft, and really very beautiful, if such things can be said to be beautiful. We clapped and clapped, and my father, like the sweet fool he could be at times, shouted 'Bravo! Bravo!'

Very dejectedly my mother said, 'This is the one I was going to wear to the White House.'

Then she burst into tears.

My father took her in his arms, kissed her, and tried to comfort her with that profound platitude about all of us having our health, and health being a richer prize than wealth or fame.

'It was all Billy Carroll's fault,' she said when she caught her breath between sobs. 'I always knew he was a big liar.'

'Now don't cry,' my father kept telling her tenderly. 'You'll get your nice dress all spotted.'

'I don't care,' she said, wiping a tear from her eye. 'Nobody'll ever see it again, anyway.'

This, of course, was only the exaggeration of despair, for in time all her friends saw it, and admired it, and told her how lovely she looked in it, and whenever she put it on for them she would always go to the pains of fixing her hair and powdering her face. At such times, whether afternoon or evening, her manner unavoidably would become formal and her posture stately. One could even notice the dress's influence on her speech and conversation when she had it on. She was very proud of it, and always spoke of it as her 'White House' dress.

THREE BAYS

BY WILLIAM BEEBE

I

THREE is a magic number, and a bay is in the upper bracket of wonders of the world. If you are in a lake in a boat, you cannot get anywhere else; if on an island, you are completely isolated. But a bay permits access to all the seven seas, and at the same time affords a safe haven from dangers, within the kindly outstretched arms of Mother Earth.

Along the great curving sweep of the Pacific from Mexico to Panama there are forty-odd bays, and into every one we nosed the *Zaca*. It was the Thirty-eighth Expedition made by the Department of Tropical Research of the New York Zoölogical Society, and for the second time Templeton Crocker had put his splendid two-masted yacht at our disposal in our search for rare creatures of sea and land. We found each bay to be a little world in itself, bounded on one side by great smashing breakers of the open sea, and on the other by range upon range of lofty sierras, which shut out all fierce storms and also, by insulation, preserved the ancient charm and simplicity of the native inhabitants.

The twoscore bays were as individual as people; some were good for our purposes, others quite barren of life. But always the great breakers of the Pacific boomed on rock or sand, the surging tides reaching up hungrily and impartially toward cactus or orchid; always the life of tide pools and shallows, and the unbelievable creatures of the cold black depths, held us breathless. An exploring scientist

cheats life at every step, for minute by minute he is able to extract more of fun and sheer joy than any other human being.

Tangola-Tangola may be taken as typical of the bays of southwestern Mexico, a sort of no man's land as to north and south. From the first day we saw it on the chart it appeared promising, with its sheltered anchorage and varied types of bottom for dredging. Furthermore, we liked its name, with its stuttering suggestion of a South Sea island.

Back from the crescent of the water's edge, the shore rose into low hills covered thickly with scrubby cactus growth and small trees, partly dry, partly green, with here and there masses of white frangipani, or scattered blossoms of bright yellow. The only radical departure from this type of foliage was the low stretches of intense green mangroves, marking the contours of lagoons of various sizes, just behind the sand dunes.

Landing through breakers is always exciting. When there were several of us, the danger, even from an unexpected undertow, was reduced to minimum, yet we were always worried about guns, cameras, and glasses until we were safe ashore. Curiously enough, the greatest risk in this respect, until we learned how to cope with it, was after the boat had stranded in barely six inches of water.

With our precious instruments clutched

tight, we sat braced on the seats, facing shoreward, while our Samoan manoeuvred so that we should start on the summit of one of the lesser swells and ride it swiftly, with the next, perhaps a giant, following close behind. I have never seen any explanation, and it is probably an endless series of coincidences, but time after time the waves seemed to come in threes — three ordinary ones, then a whale of a fourth. Up and down we would float, high aloft and down into the trough of swell after swell. Then Pe's muscles would ripple; quick powerful strokes gave us impetus, so that we remained on the crest, rushing along with it faster and faster, yet holding back to the shoulder of the green-curving breaker; then a final rush through the seething white smother. The froth came past, far higher than our gunwale, but water at such a moment has no time to turn and pour sideways, and it and we must hurtle shorewards. With a final pull Pe shouted to us to leap, and, even as we obeyed, the sand had stopped the boiling flood and turned it back.

Now was the critical moment, and we had learned to look at the boat or at the shore, but never at the water around us. If we did this last, the optical illusion would be our undoing. Time after time, until I had learned better, I stepped out of an absolutely stationary boat, solidly grounded in the sand, and pitched forward headlong on my face. The stop had occurred without a jolt, but the return wave rushing past us out to sea gave the impression that we were surging swiftly ahead. All our instinctive sense of balance came into play to counteract this movement, and before our feet could undeceive us, could tell that there was no motion whatever, we would crash to our knees in the sandy rush. It was the old story of another train slowly passing our stationary one, only this was deception carried to the *n*th power. The best way of all was to shut one's eyes and jump.

Just as we started swell-riding in

Tangola-Tangola, a terrific tug on my trolling line nearly upset me, and some great fish splashed astern. Simultaneously, a magnificent male man-o'-war bird swooped on narrow, angular wings, its toy balloon of a scarlet throat pouch half inflated, and looked at my catch. I had only a net and the line in my hand, and when we stranded I was over like a flash. All I had learned about not looking at the passing wave was forgotten in the excitement, and, although we were motionless in three inches of water, I shot forward in a beautiful somersault. My wrist was cut deep by the taut line before I could get up, stop the fish, avoid the next wave, and haul in a lovely lilac and bronze jack-crevalle, fighting to the last, and drawing several others of his kind up to the curving, transparent mirror of the second line of swells.

II

At one side of the bay of Tangola, squared, were steep cliffs, and here giant limpets were everywhere, especially on the outermost promontories. They were really big chaps, measuring about four by six inches, sloping up at a slow, comfortable angle to a blunt summit. At almost low tide, as far down as I could see, the limpets were crawling about. Above water they were scattered quite regularly as to general abundance, but with no regularity as to orientation of head, rear, or side, and averaging about two limpet lengths from each other. This made it difficult for any individual to move in a straight line without touching or climbing over the shell of a neighbor. Long before the tide covered them, the limpets began to stand on tiptoe, which is to say about a half inch from the rock, to get under way and to graze. Each was surrounded by an aura of short greenish algae.

I selected one limpet, named him Breathless, and watched him. He protruded his head and began creeping slowly forward. As he moved, he ex-

posed, on the surface of the rock where he had been resting, a thin, white deposit of lime where his body and the edge of the shell had lain. The growth of greenish-black algæ began immediately outside of this oval. The head of my limpet was bent down, and the tips of the back horns and tentacles touched the surface. The latter played deliberately about, evidently feeling the way, while the mouth was constantly applied to the rock. Wherever this passed, a narrow swath of algæ was eliminated, the rock becoming clearly visible, not hidden as before the passing of the snail's scythe. Soon the limpet came in contact with his nearest neighbor and kept on pushing. The animal pushed against raised its shell and faced the intruder. My snail pushed beneath the other's shell, and then ensued a struggle between living tanks. I could detect the strain and leverage. This continued for several minutes, every down-crashing rain of spray from the advancing waves giving the animals increased energy. For a time the push was equal, resulting only in both shells being slightly canted upward; then my friend gave way and turned to one side. All this time he had never ceased grazing from his neighbor's land. My last view of Breathless showed him turned and headed for the pasturage of another of his fellows. As he sped, his neck (if such a term can be used) behind the head was lifted clear of the rock, arched upward so that only the mouth, the tentacle tips, and the oval foot touched the surface.

On many of the limpets large barnacles were growing, and whenever a wave covered the mollusk even for a few seconds the crustaceans opened their ivory gates and swept madly at the water with their little curved feet. On two large adjoining rocks, covered with about two hundred of these great snails, every limpet had a small limpet attached to its shell. A few had three. As the greater one crawled slowly from its 'form,' so, at the same time, the young one on its

back also left its pitch, its camping place showing a white tissue of lime. Within ten minutes, while I watched, one small limpet made a complete circuit of his mount's shell, eating as he went. Fascinated, I examined two small ones with a lens to see if by chance I could detect a third generation upon their shells, but I saw nothing but tiny crustaceans, sow-bug cousins of the sea.

The problem of food was an interesting one. It would almost seem that the growth of the seaweed must keep pace with the garnered harvest of each day's requirements. There is not the slightest doubt but that each limpet lives in its own form, perhaps for years, but whether it is able to trek past all its neighbors and go on prolonged foraging expeditions I cannot tell. Somehow it must be able to find sufficient aliment to return to its own particular home.

This homing theory was too important to accept without definite proof. Finally I located two forms which were abnormal, with an irregularity at one point in the circumference of each. I began searching and soon found both tenants. I pried them from their hold and carried them back, one at a time, and found that they fitted perfectly into their respective niches. One settled down with the break in his shell fitting like a machined tool into the break on the edge of the form. When he drew down, no instrument or power of mine could dislodge him. Then I put a strange limpet in the second place. He tried to settle, but his limy circumference did not fit, it was too narrow and had no break in the northwest rim. So he began to crawl away. Then I substituted the rightful owner and all was well. This second animal I had found fifteen feet away on the down slope of a rock wholly out of even my sight of his home. I could trace his safari, however, by the narrow swath through the seaweed. At the change of the tide, which is clock and season for these beings, they all turn, doubtless still feeding, and before the

rock dries they are back on their old stand, tight clamped, brooding on whatever limpets know to brood upon.

Once settled down, they are impervious to any ordinary attack by any reasonable enemy. More than a century ago Walter Scott wrote, 'He stuck like a lampit to a rock,' and this is the limpet's quality of qualities. Give him warning, and even the tip of a knife cannot be inserted beneath his person. Whether by the judicious seepage of some weak acid or by sheer attrition, these big fellows are just sufficiently counter-sunk into the rock to make their socket impregnable.

Other kinds of limpets have an oblong hole at the summit of their shelly wigmans — they are known as keyhole limpets. But the great limpets of Tangola-Tangola — *Patella mexicana*, conchologists call them — lived in solid, massive, concrete tents; the lock was spiked, the key thrown away, and the combination wholly lost in a passive resistance which should confine their Enemy Number One to old age.

As I sat and watched my special limpet city, my mind went back to a time three decades ago on the opposite side of the world, when I sat in my Chinese houseboat and looked at one of the strangest of cities. It too had quaint roofs, it was built on mighty rocks, and it also had a feeling of quiet capability. It was on the Yangtze River, at the entrance of the great gorges, and its name was Ichang. So before I left my Tangola-Tangola city of limpets I printed the word ICHANG very blackly, and erected it in a cleft stick. I felt it was appropriate because in Chinese it means 'Fitting Prosperity,' and I thought the limpets would like that. At times even a scientist likes to be foolish.

III

The Bay of Corinto is small, in the heart of a wilderness of mangroves, grotesque trees standing everywhere on

spindly stilts of roots in glistening mud, or wading knee-deep at high tide.

We looked eastward from the deck of the *Zaca* as she swung at her Corinto anchorage, and the horizon was a level stretch of green. This was the outer, pioneer growth of the mangrove wilderness, and was worthily named *Isla Encantada* — the Enchanted Island. In a launch we went up the main tidal waterway, locally called *rio*, and on for miles into smaller and smaller channels, twisting and turning until our boat actually grounded on marshy land, where we caught glimpses of apparently amphibious cattle. There was no need to blaze our way, although every mangrove looked exactly like every other millionth one, and although, en route, we boxed nine tenths of the compass. In order to retrace our steps we simply drifted with the ebbing tide, and always chose larger and larger openings. Patient herons were everywhere, motionless as Japanese screens — waiting for low tide; gaudy crabs scuttled around the arching roots, which in turn were braided with sleeping snails and frilled with oysters.

As we paddled along the tortuous channels, unexpected things happened: as when something fell from an overhead branch into the water near by and drenched us with spray. The only person who happened to be watching said it was a very short and thick snake, but I had seen an iguana in the air before, and knew that the closely folded legs in the dive would make a half glimpse fit this description. This water dive gains interest when we know that when the lizard leaps from a treetop it spreads eagles to fullest extent to help break its fall onto scrub, and incidentally to make us wonder if such a performance was not part of the beginning of flight in birds.

At low tide a seining party went into the mangroves and tried to land on an exposed mud bank. The first two men sank slowly, but with apparent prospect of complete ultimate submergence into the black, sticky mass. They were ex-

tracted with difficulty and to an accompaniment of epithets expressing distinct disapproval of the experience. The only other method of unaided entrance by human beings was by climbing from arch to arch of what botanists call 'pithy, lenticulate, arching prop roots.' This looked easy, but when to the soap-like slipperiness of the roots was added their unpredictable yielding quality, the unattached bases of many, and the total lack of solid footing, progression was exhausting, painful, and futile.

Night worked a magic in this region, which we discovered by accident. Late one afternoon we drifted slowly down the maze of outer channels. Mud banks were being rapidly uncovered and birds became numerous. Spotted sandpipers trotted singly along the edge of the water, and Hudsonian curlews were in twos and threes. Now and then they rose and went off through side passages with their wonderful notes ringing out, somehow out of place in these hot mangrove jungles. Alabaster egrets watched us pass, and not even an eyelid moved. A pair of fork-tailed flycatchers appeared in the treetops and swooped swiftly up, around, and down, their tail feathers floating and curving after them. A snakebird climbed, awkward as a sea lion on land, and twoscore white ibises were the loveliest of all the birds, long white streamers against the dark green, set off with bright pink foreheads and beaks. Six parakeets flew over, screeching, and still higher the vultures always watched us hopefully.

As we went on into the sunset, the afterglow grew into a marvelous intensity, staining the mangrove roots bright red and the waters of the bay bright orange and salmon from the gold and scarlet clouds. At this moment I saw a faint mist of dots moving high over the mangroves. They might have been a cloud of gnats fifty feet away, or sandpipers at a quarter mile, or innumerable vultures a full mile off. My number sixes were no use, and only twelves resolved

them definitely into birds. I watched until my eyes ached, for I had never seen so many feathered creatures at once, and was rewarded. At last one dark mass veered and swung downward, and as they went the rays of the setting sun painted them for a moment with pure emerald, and a thousand green meteors vanished below the mangrove horizon — Amazon parrots, to my guess.

The next night I anticipated this marvelous sight, and I went ashore on the distant Enchanted Island. I found a horizon opening and arranged myself comfortably on the beach. The hosts appeared in the distant sky suddenly without my seeing them arrive, four separate legions that shuttled back and forth, silhouetted against the sky. The flocks would almost fuse and then separate again, the fraying strands being always parrot-wise in twos, fours, or sixes. For a long ten minutes they swung high in air, drawn like gray veils across the afterglow and the lavender cones of the distant volcanoes. Then a new flock came from nowhere, not more than a quarter mile away, and my focus was perfect. I plainly saw the green color, and suddenly the long, pointed tails. So they were not parrots, but parakeets or conures.

What amusing things our sense organs are! When I held the birds in focus, sitting breathless and open-mouthed, I could distinctly hear the faint screaming from the thousands of throats. When I labored with naked eyesight alone, the sound died to vanishing point, increasing, a moment later, through the glasses. It seems impossible to record sense impressions of more than one kind simultaneously with equal perception.

At every swoop of the birds a few isolationists would ravel out and a few pairs dive down, not to reappear. My fifth flock crossed and amalgamated with one of the others, and then the whole multitude hurled itself down in a final nose dive, and out of sight. No hint in the low, dead-level horizon line told of

the sleeping tens of thousands of little breathing forms. Scores of mangroves had their foliage doubled, as innumerable pairs of parakeets huddled close together on the branches, and apart from all other pairs. Without our man-made, high-power binoculars we should never have known what they were.

But the scientist in me was still far from satisfied. There are more than a dozen species of parrots and parakeets in this general region, and how could I make certain of the exact species of this somnolent army? I offered a reward, then a larger one, a third more munificent. All to no use: no one would venture into the fearsome mangroves at night: *cosas* — 'things' — floated there in the moonlight which it were ill to gaze upon.

As so often happens to me, proof came in a roundabout way. We were drinking most excellent beer amid the tarnished magnificence of Christie's bar in Corinto when I was hailed by a stout, jolly person who recalled to me that in years past I used to buy birds from him, at the time I was building up the collection in the Zoölogical Society's Zoo. In the backyard of the bar were hundreds of parrots and small sad-faced monkeys, which he was taking to New York. He had none of my parakeets, but knew of a boy who had caught one. The bird had fallen into the water, after a fight with one of its kind, from a large passing flock.

The boy was summoned and the bird changed hands for fifty *centavos*, or about twelve cents. It was perfectly tame and climbed about our persons, making contented little sounds and gratefully accepting anything edible. Here were eleven inches of pleasant personality, clothed in greens of various pleasing shades, from grass to apple. As we approached the *Zaca* I was externally merely the possessor of a new pet; within I felt the unpleasant symptoms of a Judas. On board, Perico immediately held court and happily received the approval of everyone. Only the

cats watched the newcomer with unexpressive agate eyes, but a slight movement of the lips.

What I had to do I had to do quickly, so while everyone was drinking cocktails I excused myself with some mumbled lie and went below. When I came up I had an extra-quick one and probably exhibited futile enthusiasms about nothing in particular. One of my staff has a keen nose for chloroform, and soon after dinner my crime was discovered. I became an outcast and a thing abhorred and was reminded none too gently that even to the lowest savages the life of a guest is sacred. I protested something about the cats, and that Perico had passed away painlessly with a smile on her beak, but it did little good. At least she fulfilled a destiny of sorts and we now knew that the mangrove multitudes were *Aratinga holochlora strenua*, the Nicaraguan Ivory-billed Green Parakeet. At which my unsympathetic Carcinologist remarked, 'So what?'

III

We were blown out of Nicaragua and into Costa Rica by a lusty Papagayo. For some unknown reason this word, which in German means 'parrot,' here signified an eternal continental draft, a pain in the neck of our researches, blowing through the open window in the wall of the mighty Sierra Mountains. It is a whole winter affair, from November to April, so if you are a native you either get used to it or go crazy. For once I appreciated the old-fashioned maps which had personified cherubs and devils blowing, with distended cheeks, the good and the evil winds.

The first notch in the coast of Costa Rica is the bay of Santa Elena, and we headed for a baylet in its side with the title of *El Canelo*, or Cinnamon Bay. After the hours of fierce buffeting it looked to us like the fabled Isles of Spice. In fact it proved to be one of the loveliest places of earth, bounded by

mountains which mitigated the source of the wind, roughly circular, about a mile across, with heavy jungle on the nearer slopes. The higher ranges to the north rose to grass and rocky heights, the trees dying out in straggling pioneers.

There may be more diversified regions, but for its size I have never seen its equal in this respect. The greatest drawback was the overlapping of distinct areas — the three-ringed circus of interest of the wild life of sea, shore, and jungle. This is a bay where I should like to spend a full year through all the seasons, watching the shift and change under water, along the shore, in mangroves, palm and thorn forest, and upland grass meadows.

One of our first trips took us through lush mangroves, the tide carrying us along through ever-narrowing channels until we pushed our way by hand along ultimate water paths, flushing curlews, bitterns, herons, and kingfishers. Dry land appeared and we climbed up into an enchanted forest, or rather park, of lofty trees where bands of spider monkeys swung by their tails, apparently exchanging pointed remarks on how queer human beings looked upside down.

One lot of three females were all carrying babies, and in all the pram method was identical. The baby had its tail tightly wrapped around the base of its mother's tail, as it lay on her back, with its little arms around her mid-body, gripping the hair on the lower sides. The hind legs lay straight out behind, with the black soles up, dangling close to the haunch of the mother. In this way the limbs and tail of the parent were quite free, and the baby safe from any sudden danger of being crushed when the mother dropped from one branch or tree to another, with widespread limbs. When the parents sat down and looked at us, the little chaps would pull themselves up, and their black faces would peer at us alongside that of their mummy.

Here I observed what later became a common occurrence, that all the mem-

bers of the band followed one another, and took exactly the same path through the trees. Each took hold of the identical part of the same branch as the one ahead, leaped free at the same spot, and used the hands at the same place. Arboreal safari for spider monkeys is as fixed as a well-worn trail through thick undergrowth.

Until I was allowed to possess a gun I was botanist and entomologist of sorts; then I became ornithologist for the greater part of my life, and in the last decade I have turned ichthyologist. These are all lip-services, however, for the underlying urge is to glimpse some small, clear gleam of the workings of evolution in some sub-sub-division of an insignificant bypath of animal life and development. So it was that in the intervals between actually straining every effort to solve fish problems of this bay, I was conscious of the wild life in general.

My two assistants had left me alone on East Beach, one on a sketching assignment, and the other to delve into the intimate life of the fiddler crabs among the mud-flats farther along the shore. I settled down between two giant black mangrove trees, one of which was hollow, wind- and age-worn. I made camp by opening my dispatch case of glasses, note-books, and vials, scooped two holes in the sand for my heels, and sat down on a life-preserver filched from the boat. This precaution was out of respect for the *bête rouge*, those infinitesimal mites which seem to be among the most successful of living creatures, sustained by the ultimate *n*th-power hope of being able to feast upon a human being before they die. I have found them equally enthusiastic on the tennis courts of Virginia and in the tropical jungles of British Guiana, and here on the shores of the Pacific they teemed from the grass of the upland meadows to the very jetsam of high tide line.

As my job today was static, I allowed myself the luxury of two pairs of glasses,

my smallest Number Threes for near-by use and quick identification, and the powerful Number Twelves which required knee-rest for distance. In addition to my two giant mangroves was a third, a whitened, dead tree. Hardly had I taken my seat when a sonorous swish of wings drew my eyes, and out flew a great blue heron, whose spindly frame and immobility had up to this moment made him one with the tree. As I looked, two black hawks flew into the same tree, the common white-banded black species. They were handsome birds and peered at me fearlessly, uttering pleasantly quavering hawk notes. An interesting thing about birds of prey is the possibility of prophesying the diet of a species from its psychological reaction to human beings. At one end are the vultures which are almost completely fearless. At the other are the fierce falcons and eagles, who pursue and kill their prey, diving after the strongest and swiftest creatures they can manage. These black hawks have the noble facies of gerfalcons, but their all-too-tame-ness hints that gastronomically they are among the ignoble Raptores, satisfied at the most with small lizards, but usually content with grasshoppers, snails, crabs, and even dead fish. There is nothing vulturine in their mien, but their ease in the presence of mankind is a certain proof that no black hawk ever struck down a flying duck, or any bird near its own weight. By the same token bald eagles are far less wild than are golden eagles.

Two blurred objects on the shore, near two stranded logs, came into focus with a twist of the binocular thread. They were a pair of spotted sandpipers, one with a primary feather reversed and standing straight up from the wing, waving in the breeze. I watched them idly as they passed on, when suddenly there took place within the small circle of the lens a happening that brought me to breathless attention. The little chap with the half-molted feather was abruptly knocked off his feet into a flutter-

ing heap. Discarding the glass, I saw the whole tragedy clearly. The second log, the one somewhat farther away, had come suddenly to life, shifting from dead vegetable to living animal, and with a single, unbelievably swift, sideways flick had knocked the sandpiper over. As I looked, a head turned, jaws opened, and a four-foot crocodile sank from sight with the pitiful fluff of feathers. I watched the rising stream of bubbles, I listened to the agonizing *peeeep-peeeep!* of the other bird and the shrieking cackles of two oyster-catchers until all were lost in the distance. The only remaining proof of what my eyes had seen was that there remained just one log instead of two. I immediately focused on the second to make certain it was what it appeared to be. During the past two days I had watched small crocodiles floating past, but the movement plus the two bulging eyes identified them at once. This stranded individual had completely fooled two sandpipers and myself.

A medley of voices arose soon after the sandpiper tragedy, and as it did not die down, I walked quietly along the inland trail. Just beyond the uprooted base of a giant tree, I saw the flock of birds and simultaneously felt a sharp bite on my ankle. I had stepped into the line of march of army ants, and as instantly I stepped out again. The reason for the flock now became apparent; they were the camp-following vanguard feeding on the insects which crept, ran, hopped, or flew to escape their dreaded enemy. I found a convenient dead branch and as quietly as possible drew it back and forth across the trail of the ants. I knew that this would so infuriate them that they would deploy in search of the creature which dared disturb them, and this would keep them, and consequently the birds, in the same place for some time. I sought safety and settled to watch. There were four kinds of antbirds and a surprising lot of orioles. Three troupials fluttered about after

insects, alternating satisfied swallows with clusters of liquid notes. A black-throated oriole flew down close to me, and then suddenly I was glad to see a friend from home, a Baltimore oriole among these alien surroundings. What tales migrants such as this and the sandpipers had to tell their nestlings. No wonder each season's brood is so anxious to set out on its autumnal, austral voyage of discovery!

Finally, six rich rufous beauties scaled down to the ant-driven harvest — rufous cuckoos. They measured more than a half yard over all, and their exciting loveliness of plumage, with the long, trailing, white-tipped tail made them most conspicuous birds. They saw me at once but showed only polite curiosity, now and then uttering their low, soft snarl, which is in no sense a snarl, but lacks any adequate expression in the English tongue. They flew gently, gliding whenever possible, and fed gently, daintily selecting small morsels with no sense of hunger or haste, but somewhat reluctantly, like the oyster-eating carpenter.

I was squatting quite motionless and comfortably, having only now and then to wink. So one cuckoo relegated me to the background of innocuous growths and, alighting on a partly bare branch, proceeded to take a sun-bath. The plumage of these cuckoos is so soft and silky that it would seem as if the water or dust bath to which most birds are addicted would leave it with permanently bedraggled feathers. This sun-bathing was as elaborate as it has become among human beings, but was infinitely more artistic and pleasing to observe. The bird first sat still and looked in all directions, complimenting me by concentrating on the branches overhead and the sky. It suddenly struck a pose, legs apart, leaning backward, slanting the great tail and spreading it until it formed a gorgeous, open, feathered fan, curved so that the white tips showed from both sides. The wing on the slanted side followed and

was expanded until, like the argus pheasant, it presented a plaque, in this case of solid rufous. Always the eye of the bird played back and forth across the sky; at least at such a period of toilet-making, a realization of possible danger was evident.

Slowly the feathers of the head and neck were raised (through the lenses I could distinguish every separate plume), until all beauty of color was lost, and the plaque acquired the appearance of moth-eaten plumage long neglected in some dusty attic. After a few minutes the bird began to pant, and in addition to general dishevelment was added the impression of acute physical torture. Ten minutes, and all muscles relaxed, and the bird began to pick and preen its plumage, the intensive picking hinting that ticks and *bête rouge* may afflict *Piaya cayana* as well as *Homo sapiens*. Not until a second bath was enjoyed by the other wing, with the tail reslanted, did the bird shake its whole being, wipe its beak on the branch and fly up into a mass of lavender flowers-of-Cortez.

On my return to the shore, I had once more settled down to a final hour of writing when a tantalizing wheezy note arose from the tree overhead. I had to determine whether it was insect or bird, and my eye went at once to what looked like a small duck perched in a crotch. This spelled no sense whatever, yet amid the shadows of the foliage I could see bill, eye, and the head drawn close to the back. Two feet farther up I was startled to see the brilliant and unmistakable tail loop of a boa constrictor, and now I followed it down to the small duck, the scales fell from my eyes, and for the life of me I could not regain the anatine illusion; there was no duck, there had been no duck; only three loops of a beautifully colored serpent. I needed a boa for comparison with a strangely patterned specimen I had caught a few days before. A second would decide whether this unusual coloration was of

specific or only individual significance.

The snake was twenty feet above me, on a dead branch which would not sustain my weight for a moment. I cut a long, forked stick and began to jiggle him, which made him only grip the tighter. He began to creep slowly up the branch, when I got a good purchase with a recurved crook, and swinging on it, broke the whole branch, and down came a rain of rotten wood, debris, dust, and more than seven feet of snake. Fearing it would escape if it touched the ground, I blindly clutched at it in mid-air, and no lifelong-trained juggler could have done it better, for my fingers closed firmly around the neck just behind the head. Like all his kind, he gaped widely, uttering hiss after hiss, showing every needle tooth and an enormous expanse of dead white gullet, all the time trying with every muscle to coil and twist free. Then he gave up and, as boas are real gentlemen, he shrugged whatever passes for serpentine shoulders and resigned himself to what might come. From this moment on, there was no visible resentment or active attempt at escape. The coils came slowly up and around my hand and arm, and when I had cleared the dirt from my eyes, I did not have to shift my grip a single inch.

Back at my seat I found there was no string or bag or container, so that I had to shift my hold to my left hand and continue my notes with my right. My foot rested gently on his tail on the sand, because with all his folds in a double lock on my wrist he was able to stop the blood supply, and the hand ached too much to keep a tight grip. As it was, I had to stop writing every ten minutes, shift hands, and exercise to restore circulation. As the lowering sun struck his armor, he was one of the most beautiful things in the world, each scale giving off blue and green fire-opal reflections. Like the jumbled mass of leaf patterns and leaf shadows scattered along his body, his very eyes, lidless and unwinking, were also mottled with gray and

brown, while the vertical slit of visual connection with the outside world was almost invisible.

During one of the hand-to-hand shifts I happened to look out over the bay, and saw floating past a pair of huge sea turtles, clasped in the awkward embrace of chelonian affection. I focused my glasses and perceived that it was a most active amorous episode, for not only were they excitedly clambering over and around one another, but both were revolving as they drifted past. First one arched back would emerge decorated with clusters of barnacles, and then the other, gay with waving strands of emerald seaweed. Which sex flaunted the weed and which had acquired the barnacle insignia will never be known. This afternoon was rapidly becoming dominantly a reptilian one.

When I withdrew my eyes from the binoculars, I found that I was quite securely handcuffed by two loops of boa, one of which was a figure eight. I saw the boatmen approaching, and did not untwine the snake until they had had full benefit of what to them was an incredibly terrible situation. They were strong, brave, able seamen, but I think if it came to a choice of unwinding the coils with their own hands they would have left me marooned forever on the beach!

I subsequently made my color comparison, housed the boa overnight on the yacht, and next day set him free on the exact spot on which he would have fallen from the tree. He gathered himself together, watched me calmly, and finally, with exploratory flickering of his tongue, slowly and with dignity made his way into a tangle of underbrush. From the opposite side I watched him glide smoothly away. Long before he had passed from my actual field of vision, he vanished suddenly from my inability to disentangle him from his surroundings.

The boa constrictor of East Beach had entered and had left my life; he none the worse, and I with added knowledge and respect for him and for his race.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

PULLMAN CONVERSATION

HE WAS a Pullman porter on the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. I had asked him, shortly after we had left Chicago, for a table on which to set my typewriter.

As he set it up, there were the usual innocuous and inevitable pleasantries of conversation — the weather, the ride, the news, and so forth. Then, as a passenger walked past us, the porter steered the conversation into more specific channels.

'See that man who just walked through the car? Never seen him before, but I bet I can tell you where he's from.'

I was interested and smiled questioningly.

'He's probably from Idaho or Utah or one of the big Western states. You don't have to look at that leather face of his to tell it, either.'

By this time I was intrigued. Was it his clothes, or his shoes, or his stride, or any other external giveaway?

'No,' said the porter. 'It's just what he does and the way he does it. After 'bout twenty years on this job, it's pretty easy to tell them apart, which ones are Westerners, which are Easterners, which are Southerners, which are foreigners. This one got on at Chicago just five minutes ago, and he's probably covered every inch of this train by now, outside the engine, and he'd probably be in that, too, if he could. That's the way Westerners is. They like to move around. Sit down. Up for water. Down again. Out for a smoke.'

'Easterners. It's not so easy to tell Easterners. But most Easterners come in, sit down, reach for their newspapers or their books — or, like you, start working right away. You don't mind me guessing that you're from somewhere in the East, maybe somewhere in New England?'

It pleased him when I told him he was right; then he went on: —

'Most Easterners, and I don't care whether they're on the way to a vacation or traveling for business — most Easterners never ask you the time or about how long it's goin' to take to get to their station. They carry their

own watches, their own timetables, and far's I can make out, their own cups and water coolers, 'cause Easterners never have to get up for water.

'Southerners aren't like that. They don't move around much, like the Westerners, and they don't keep to themselves, like the Easterners. They generally like to talk to someone — the passenger in the next seat or someone in the smoking room or the lounge car. 'Course, when the Southerner begins to talk, you can tell he's a Southerner, but even if you couldn't tell, he gives himself away by the things he talks about. He likes to talk about the number of times he's made the trip and compare this railroad with all the other railroads in the country.'

He finished adjusting the typewriter table and sat down in the chair opposite me — I was sitting in the last seat in the car — and after I thanked him, he looked as though he hadn't finished saying what he wanted to, but was reluctant to continue talking, now that his job was done.

I urged him to go on, which he did; and soon the conversation progressed from things regional to things general. Several times during the conversation he stopped to ask whether he wasn't keeping me from my work, but I assured him that I was deeply interested in what he had to say. Nor was I merely being polite; what interested me particularly was a philosophy of life — yes, I guess you might call it that — which had grown up out of twenty years of serving people on Pullmans, making their beds, bringing them things to eat and things to drink, setting up tables for them, whether for work or for games. He had had ample opportunity to observe people when they were relaxed and when they were agitated; when they were on their way to a vacation or a business deal; when they were going to greet friends or relatives or when they were trying to get away from them. And he had had plenty of time to think, and, judging from his observations, he had spent that time to good advantage.

After about a half-hour, he went off to answer a call. I put a sheet in the typewriter

and wrote out the account of our conversation — using his own words as well as I could recall them: —

'Too bad you Easterners are too busy when you ride the trains to look out and see what the country is like. Here you've really got a chance to see how people live. If you ride in a bus or a car, mostly you skip around the towns. 'Specially in a car you take all the nice roads where you see a lot of pretty scenery, 'ceptin' the billboards, but you miss a lot more'n you see. And when you're in a plane — 'course I don't really know, 'cause I've never been in a plane, but that's what people who've been in planes tell me — well, when you're in a plane, everything ugly just fades right out and all you see is a lot of nice colors all rolled together like a big patchwork quilt.

'But ride the trains, man, ride the trains. I'm not trying to drum up trade for the railroads. I'm just saying this because I know what I'm saying. Ride the trains if you want to poke around the insides of this country of ours.

'Here's where you can tell where the country's strong and where the country's weak. Ain't an important industry or plant in America but what's not right off some railroad line. You can just sit right here with a scorecard and tell whether we're in a depression by counting the smokestacks that show some life.

'Back in '33 and '34, there wasn't a day but what you could tell that another plant had closed down. And you could always see new signs saying "No Help Wanted" go up every day. And sometimes you could see the headlines.

'Sometimes you can ride along for hours and see broken-down shacks or barns that were once pretty prosperous-lookin'. And people who haven't seen this think they know America. You can pass through town after town that hasn't had a new building or a new road built for fifteen years — sometimes you can see towns that shot up in a single year, maybe thirty or forty years ago, and haven't built or torn down a buildin' ever since.

'Yessir, there's plenty of work a waitin' to be done in this country. Least, accordin' to what I've seen. And the quicker we get to doin' it, the better. As it is now, one year the chimneys are all smokin' and the next year they're all quited down. One year the farms

are all pretty busy, the next year they look half dead.

'No use in seeing America unless you're going to see what it's really like. 'Course if all a body's interested in is pretty scenery or tall buildings, I guess this isn't the place for them.

'Yessir, this isn't the place for them. Even if they did see all those plants they'd say they were ugly without knowin' why they were ugly. It wasn't the plants and the machinery that was ugly; it was being closed down that made them ugly. But when they're open and going, when the night just bunches right up with the afternoon in the winter, and you can see the smelters making fires in the sky — you wouldn't want to see anything prettier. And in the morning when you ride past them and see more men than you thought ever lived park their cars outside the plant and walk in through the gates, a lot of them foolin' around with each other, stealing hats and playing football with lunch boxes, yessir, that's when this country's got something you can't see anywhere else in this world.

'Been working on this railroad for twenty-three years, long enough to get about everything out of riding a railroad anyone'd want. But when I retire, I'm going to take me and the missus and really see this country all over again. By railroad.'

NORMAN COUSINS

SECURITY

To drive each reasonable thought
Into the ground,
Tall and close like a palisade —
A row of clear conclusions neatly peeled
Of every urgency —
Is to be
Ultimately delayed
Beyond the reach of impulse;
Is to be
Safe . . . yet terribly dismayed!

And love, afraid,
Patterned, inlaid
With sensible advices,
Grows pallid in the sickly air
Of wisdom;
*Like grass pressed down too long
Beneath a seasoned board.*

MARTHA BANNING THOMAS

BLACKOUT

IN THE small California community where I live, there are three schools of thought about flashlights. The largest is the blue-cellophane school, discouraged not at all by recent army pronouncements. 'But they used blue lights in France last time. Why, the night our train came into Paris —' Next in size comes the adhesive-tape group. If you take strips of adhesive and press them over the head of your flash with only the narrowest crisscross between, what you get is a tiny ball of light not unlike the gleam of a cat's eye in the dark. Are the Japanese going to start bombing whenever they see a cat? The third school, the one to which I belong, is anti-flash altogether. Why, we inquire, go wandering about during blackouts? Dr. Johnson, when conversation failed him, used to sit 'exploring the magnificent resources of his own mind.' My school advises exploration. Already, even in these few early blackouts, some of us have discovered in our minds items mislaid years ago. Then there is always the recourse of strolling about out of doors, where stars and moon and pavement make walking safe. Or if some general movement around the house cannot be avoided — well, the blind manage.

There is still a fourth opinion, hardly to be called a school since it is held by only one intrepid old lady. Eighty-four last birthday, she is against flashes too, but against them because she intends to turn off no lights. 'Giving in to them like that! My dear! When you think of the way they've acted —'

More disconcerting than any one old lady, even one Mayflower-descended, are the rugged individualists. They will turn off the electricity, certainly they will, but they will turn it off in their own good season, not on the order of some neighbor dubbed warden. Several black eyes, two police calls, and goodness knows how many ruptured neighborly relations are already chalked up to their account. The newspapers warn the wardens against being 'brusque and overbearing,' making no mention of the fact that a bomb is brusque too, and the second in command on our air council (or is he the third?) speaks soothingly of an occasional light doing no harm. It might, he says, even do good, giving the effect of a thinly settled countryside. Possibly, but then — whose light? If anybody's, why not mine? To my own warden,

who happens to be in the family, I quote Lord Acton: 'All power corrupts. And absolute power corrupts absolutely.' So far, the effect of quotation has not been wholly good.

Kitchens are the favorite blackout rooms. Why so many of us feel, with Pooh, that we shall want a little something during blackouts I don't know, but feel that way we do. Basements and bathrooms, though easier to convert, are not in the running with kitchens. The élite are laying in fitted beaverboards to cover the windows. A little lower in the social scale comes black canton flannel, and lower still, blankets and couch covers. It is amazing how few substances can be used to shut light in as compared with the many that shut it out. And somewhere a moral is hidden under the fact that the more expensive the substance, the less its present usefulness. Fleecy blankets are worthless; cotton-mixed ones, those rectangles that stretch like sheet lead across your tired body, are the variety now in demand.

Every household has its barrel of sand, most of it arriving wet. In any friend's oven you discover it drying out by the panful in readiness for those incendiary bombs which, against all exhortations, continue to smack of Orson Welles.

For that matter, all our preparations smack of Orson Welles. Work at them as we may, they are still shrouded in a feeling of theatre.

EDITH RONALD MIRRIELES

THIS BLUE DAY COMES FAIR

This blue day comes fair
By sun rising from under.
O wanderer in us here,
Do you see fire
Burning out anger, ache, plunder?

From south today
Breath sallies forth,
Blows in warm gusts
God's dare, man's despair
Field, road, hill over,

O how on kite days
No man cries pity,
But walks firm, thinks sure,
When earth lifts its shoulder
And the great sun stirs.

ARNOLD KENSETH

THE NEW ATLANTIC SERIAL

THE Children

BY NINA FEDOROVA

AUTHOR OF THE \$10,000 PRIZE NOVEL, THE FAMILY



CHAPTERS VII-XII



THE Children

BY NINA FEDOROVA



THE AUTHOR: Nina Fedorova, the Atlantic Prize novelist, was born in South Russia. Her parents were of the intelligentsia, and after the Revolution she and her family became part of the exile movement which flowed across Siberia into Manchuria and thence to China. They were driven out of Harbin by the Japanese, moved on to Tientsin, where again the Invasion engulfed them. In 1938 she and her husband and her two sons crossed the Pacific to make a fresh start as American citizens in the university town of Eugene, Oregon. There she wrote her first novel, *The Family*, which in 1940 was awarded the Atlantic Prize of \$10,000.

THE NOVEL: Tientsin is the setting of this new novel, *The Children*; the year is 1938; and the characters are Russian exiles, parents and young people living on the ragged edge of poverty with only the strands of family affection to hold them together. As the book opens, Lida, a young girl with a lovely voice, is making ready for her first concert. Her voice has been trained (without fee) by Madame Manuilova, a faded but once famous opera singer; if the girl does well in this amateur performance at Tientsin, her teacher has promised to take her on to Harbin, perhaps even to Shanghai, for professional engagements.

Lida and her mother share an attic together. To it come members of the Russian colony, for comfort, tea, and talk. Mother supports them on her slender earnings as a nurse, but her duties at the hospital prevent her attending Lida's debut. The girl is taken to the concert by their landlord, Count Diaz, a Spanish refugee, whose distinction and encouragement (they go in a taxi!) give the girl confidence. At the hall they are joined by Leon, the Count's son, and he, with the rest of the audience, is swept off his feet by the fresh and appealing beauty of Lida's singing.

Lida is walking on air, for now the trip to Harbin is assured. But she is brought down to earth when, to her embarrassment, Leon proposes to her. Caught up as she is by the ecstasy of her music and the remembrance of her American lover, Jimmy, the girl turns him down in innocent cruelty.

THE CHILDREN

BY NINA FEDOROVA

VII

LIDA'S DEPARTURE for Harbin had been decided upon, and this caused talk in the small circle of Tientsin where Lida was known. Her recent success at the concert was much commented upon and her 'brilliant future' was thenceforth taken for granted. People began 'to drop in' to the attic, interested and benevolent.

Mme. Klimova was one of the first to come. While she shrank from intruding upon anybody's grief, she always came first when any shadow of fortune was cast upon one's abode. She came 'to share,' of course.

In spite of the fact that Mme. Klimova was going through a very colorful phase of her life, she did not feel particularly happy. Yes, she had married the old man and had every right to be referred to as 'Madame la Générale' Shabalov, but nobody was in haste to give her that title. No. Instead they began to call the General 'Mme. Klimova's husband.' The poor General was never known under his proper name. He had been a 'lizard on relief' at school, a 'thistle' in the barracks, an 'old horse' to his first wife, 'the General with Maps' during his beatific years as a widower, and was now promoted to the doubtful honor of being 'Mme. Klimova's husband.' Why the public is jocose at the expense of some people, leaving in peace the others, nobody knows. The fact that General Shabalov readily answered *any* nickname showed his fatalistic attitude toward public opinion.

'At last, at last, Lida,' said Mme. Klimova, when, breathing hard after climbing the stairs, she appeared in the attic room, '... at last ... no more nonsense about your funny American bridegroom ... a good career, instead of groundless hopes ... How do you do, people?' she said, seeing there were three persons in the room.

As always, Mme. Klimova's visit was ill-timed. An interesting conversation between the Countess, Mother, and Lida was interrupted and could not be begun again in the newcomer's presence.

But Mme. Klimova was talking herself: —

'When and where are you going?'

'I am to spend Christmas in Harbin, and sometime in spring I go to Shanghai ...'

'And then?'

'I do not know. Mme. Manuilova says I must spend about four years in a school.'

'Which school?'

'I do not know. Somewhere to prepare for opera.'

'But which country?'

'I do not know yet.'

'Well, Lida, your plans are no more sound and certain than could be expected.'

Actually Lida's future had been discussed before Mme. Klimova's arrival. The Diaz family planned to return soon to Spain. The Countess loved Mother and Lida and considered the possibilities of help and support. But not a hint of

all this was given now to the visitor. Once more Mme. Klimova's sallies to affectionate friendship were doomed to failure.

She rose to leave.

Meanwhile the old General had been downstairs with the Count.

The thing which astonished Madame la Générale about her husband was the ease of his intercourse with people. He entered any house as if it were his own and was always met accordingly, as one of the family. He never had excuses, or apologies, or compliments to pay to those around him, but just would sit down, take his maps, and start a war monologue. People around were free to listen or to ignore. He was a great connoisseur of wars. Wars fascinated him. Wars and destruction were, for him, the main sign of our modern times, as a renaissance of arts or Protestantism in religion happened to be in other epochs. He was a strategist by education. But wars were not only his ex-profession, no, they were his major subject of interest, his art, his vocation, his hobby.

He approached them in the style of a Russian mind — as a problem in abstraction, conceived in elemental purity and worked in vacuum, without another thought of their being alive and clothed in flesh of human bodies. Such an approach is that of an artist, a sculptor who hews the marble, and breaks it, and hammers it, and carves, and incises — never thinking *what it is* to the marble.

This day when the General opened his maps, the Count quietly moved his chair nearer and they both sat bent low over the table with the maps on it — the General orating in ecstasy, the Count giving out only quiet monosyllables in Spanish.

Thus the ladies coming downstairs had found them.

'Are you not tired of *my* husband?' Mme. Klimova cried, and the fact that the Count, always perfectly courteous, did not answer astonished her.

'*What* are you looking at?' she cried again and in small steps ran toward the table. 'Europe? But there is *no* war in Europe?'

'Europe?' Mother repeated in apprehension and went to the table too.

'Europe?' the Countess said and looked toward the table.

'Ladies!' The General rose and held the map in his hands. 'Ladies — yes! — it is *Europe*. Look at her! She is a beauty. She is a gracious country. Look, for she will change soon.'

'How . . . how will it affect England?' Mother asked in a small voice.

'We shall not live long enough to see the whole of it . . .' he began.

But Mme. Klimova interrupted him.

'Away with prophecies! You are now a married man. I do not know,' she went on, 'why *all* the good prophets and philosophers were either single or quarreled with their wives. Why? What do *you* think, dear Count?'

The 'dear' Count was sorry, that problem never presented itself to him in that special aspect. And again he was attentively listening to the General.

Mme. Klimova, feeling excluded, yet bound to enjoy every single moment of visiting a Count, went to the chair and, pushing Dog aside, sat herself heavily.

But it is precisely when visiting a Count that one does not push, even animals. Dog stood up and looked steadily into Mme. Klimova's salmon-colored face, his nose moving into a surf of infinitesimal wrinkles. She misunderstood his attitude and, taking it for an expression of affectionate devotion, she tried to pat his neck with her plump hand.

This was far more than Dog could stand. That woman never knew *what* the scent of her water-lily face powder did to his olfactory nerves. He rolled his eyes and growled.

'In some houses even dogs have a mania of grandeur,' Mme. Klimova muttered and hastily withdrew her hand.

VIII

The talk and preparations for her trip to Harbin kept Lida in a state of growing excitement. After her lessons she went shopping with Mme. Manuilova, who bought her clothes. Lida accepted presents simply, as if it were quite natural for some to give, others to take.

On the eve of her departure Lida made several calls. One of them was on Mme. Klimova, whom she found in high spirits.

'Now go!' Mme. Klimova cried. 'Sing, charm every man on your path, choose the best one and marry him. Do not forget to invite me to your wedding ball.'

'But I am engaged . . . ' Lida began.

'You are still full of that nonsense?' Mme. Klimova asked with indignation. 'Lida, never have I expected that from a girl of your class. That love story with a boy who is remembered only because he is absent . . . Who just simply does not do anything: neither a proposal, nor an engagement, nor any kind of arrangement. Who never gave you a ring, never writes letters . . . One must be a lunatic to call this a love story. Meanwhile a real, flesh-and-blood Spanish Count lives in the same house . . . young, handsome . . . no, I simply cannot . . . I meet too much of lunacy on my way. But they say lunatics have their lucid intervals influenced by changes of the moon . . . Pray, Lida, on one of those days only look at Leon. . . .'

'But,' Lida said naively, 'I see him quite clearly. I like him. And he proposed to me, but I refused.'

'What? . . . You *what?* . . . '

'I refused. I said I loved Jimmy.'

Mme. Klimova stared at Lida's face with a sharp hawk's glance: no, the girl was not lying.

'One word to you, Lida. Only *one* word more. You are a real communist, you are a born anarchist . . . you are one of those who destroy hierarchy and traditions . . . to refuse a Count . . . no, I cannot . . . my heart is too weak,

I must not talk about that. But if I were your mother, I would throw you on your knees to repent and deplore your behavior and pray for forgiveness before God. Why blame communism or nazism or Jews when our *children* are the real cause of our ruin? They do not want to carry on tradition. You . . . in one stroke you could reestablish the glory of your family . . . and you? Oh, Lida, you fully deserve your fate . . . I wish you *would* marry that Jimmy.'

Mme. Manuilova announced that they would have a traveling companion — Mr. Rind, an American — who planned to visit Soviet Russia, and who was going to Harbin for his visa.

Mr. Rind was a traveler. At least he classified himself as such in answer to the questions in hotel registers. Mr. Rind was hardly ever asked personal questions. He belonged to that type of people who, being extremely curious themselves, yet manage not to arouse much interest in their own persons. In Mr. Rind's case, he was questioned in Tientsin only at the respective consulates where he went for visas, and by the dentist who examined his molars. The total information thus compiled showed that Mr. Rind was a traveler, of medium height, of moderate weight, and with passably good teeth. Of course, Mr. Rind was more than that, but Tientsin accepted his existence as a *status quo*.

If he said he was a traveler, perhaps he was one. Why not believe so simple a statement? Credulity saves time. Thus Mr. Rind was a traveler.

The principal types of travelers fall into two quantitatively equal groups: those who come to teach and those who come to learn. But Mr. Rind — pronouncedly — *did not* belong to either of these groups.

Under nationality, Mr. Rind wrote 'American,' meaning he came from the United States. But he could be of any nationality as well, for there was in him no peculiar trait which would suggest his

being this or that. He had no salient point on which to hook somebody's idle curiosity, nothing too characteristic or strange. One meets such gentlemen. They are usually gray, rather than blond or dark. Well-shaven. They wear decent clothes, which, if not altogether new, are well pressed, and absolutely clean shirts. They do several good deeds per day, although always on a rather smallish scale: candies to children, cigarettes to soldiers, ten cents to beggars, polite words to old ladies, but they give *nothing* to newspapermen.

All this being external, one had no clue to Mr. Rind's inner self, which he kept hidden with rather unusual care.

The three days' trip to Harbin was a fascinating experience to Lida. Mme. Manuilova and she traveled second class, Mr. Rind in first class.

Lida looked different now. Only her overcoat was old; all the rest of her attire was new, elegant, and becoming. One could instantly see she was tall, slender; she moved with grace; her eyes were a beautiful mixture of gray and blue; her hair, gold and silver; her complexion, although pale, had the pink foundation of health. It was the tenderness of her youth that made Lida look fragile. Mrs. Brown's beautiful jade brooch and Jimmy's watch on Lida's wrist added the final touches and made her look what she was not — a rich and carefree girl.

She was in a state of glorious excitement. The melancholic grandeur of the Chinese landscape slowly unrolled past the train windows. The hills, the plains, the humble villages under a brooding colorless sky, lit by the cool wintry sun, had for her the vague magic of a prelude, of the first page of a book unread, of a story untold.

Mr. Rind spent most of his time with his new companions. They had meals together and Lida's enjoyment of things astonished him.

'To begin a day with a cup of coffee!' And she would look into her cup with admiring eyes.

'Oranges?' she would say. 'At breakfast? Let us save them for dessert after dinner.'

When Mr. Rind said that oranges were not meant as a dessert but as food, for they had vitamin C . . . 'Oh, it is a joke,' she would answer. 'I do not believe it, they are too expensive to be eaten as regular food.'

Oranges and the like were a 'luxury' for her, and her enjoyment of them was touching to see. She saved the candies Mr. Rind gave her and then confessed:—

'These I shall keep for Mother.'

'Does your mother like them?'

'I do not know. I have never seen her eating candies. We never buy them.'

Meanwhile they crossed Manchuria, the country recently subjugated by Japan. The 'Rising Sun' flag waved greetings (or was it a threat?) from the roof of every official building. That 'sun' seemed too bright for the occasion, too suggestive of the blood poured out so recently on that very soil, under that very flag. There was something inquiet in the air, and the sound of a funeral flute was the only voice rising from the landscape. It was always the same flute — day and night — the same melody, the same desolation, as if it were not played by somebody, but rose by itself, the breath of the mourning earth.

Poverty, dejection, decrepitude — in everything: in the low huts of the villages, in the shabbiness of clothes, in the ill-health and degeneration of human flesh. They made the eyes sore and the heart heavy.

The passengers were not those of the past times. In addition to their general appearance of poverty, fear, and anxiety, they had a look of hopelessness in their eyes. The Chinese scarcely spoke at all. The Japanese kept smiling and bowing low to those who belonged to the ruling military classes. The Russians were restless and noisy, but the appearance of one Japanese officer would make them silent. The whites had not yet worked out a submissive attitude toward their

yellow rulers, and the appearance of one of them was felt afresh as an almost unbelievable humiliation. And the Japanese — always unpleasantly self-conscious among alien people — were not sure of themselves, as if expecting a sudden blow from behind.

IX

Among the many ways of making people die on a large scale, economic pressure is, perhaps, the best. If not the quickest, it remains the surest. Decently worded as a sonorous slogan, it can be no less effective, while so much less expensive, than a war. Manchuria was given both — war and economic pressure — under the sympathizing but reconciled eyes of the rest of the world. The white Russians in Manchuria were doomed to that inglorious end. The Russians of Manchuria, who had built Harbin forty-five years ago, were now invited to clear the stage and to do it quickly. Restrictions on all possible jobs and professions soon narrowed their means of earning to almost nothing. 'To be or not to be' became a daily question, a guess answered this way or that way only in the evening, when the day was gone and one found oneself still alive.

Not long ago these Russians were useful and active citizens of their native country; now they had turned into everybody's nuisance abroad. As the nonconformists to the communist régime, they had either to die or to run away. They chose the second and sometimes regretted the choice, for no country is eager to welcome refugees.

Only a few Russian refugees were lucky enough to find jobs in their previous professions. The bigger part of them had to depend purely on their capacity for invention and adaptation. Those who succeeded were lucky too. The rest depended on nothing, except charity. These instantly started the process of dying out or of moral degeneration.

But the chief distress of the Russian refugees in Manchuria was the complicated political situation. Soviet Russia was their persecutor; Japan, their trap; China, an indifferent witness. The lives of many depended on the current relations between Soviets and Japan, the refugees being plotted against between those two and paying with their lives for the successes and failures of both sides.

Yet Harbin remained a vigorous town — with churches, with schools, hospitals, theatres, music, libraries — all kept by Russians.

Lida's train came to Harbin early in the morning. It was cold. The sky was of the same tender, celestial blue as it was on that 'second day,' coming out of the hands of its Creator. Small, puffy clouds resembled balls of cotton carelessly dropped from somewhere above. Here and there on the ground lay patches of the snow, disintegrating, under the sun rays, into glistening crystals.

The bustle and noise were Oriental. But dominating all the turmoil of the railway station, voices of the people, hoots and whistles and honks, were heard the solemn and majestic sounds of the heavy church bells. A heavy chorus of copper voices. Then suddenly, at intervals, the merry and hurried peal of smaller silver church bells would rush in, trying to overrun each other in gay, breath-taking haste, as if they had been told exciting news and could not help crying it to mankind at the top of their silvery voices. But the big copper bells would not stand the interruption for long. They paused, took in air, and then drowned the rest of the world in waves of deep-basso humming sounds.

It was a Sunday.

In 1938 Harbin was poor, subjugated, but struggling. It was noisy, quarreling, optimistic, artistic — in short, human. At the top of commerce still stood two or three families who had had no cash for the last ten years. There were always musicians and artists struggling for a ticket abroad and — in a little while —

being heard on the radio from the capitals of the world. There were inventors, swindlers, men of science, men of wickedness, the local genius, the town fool, the local prophet, the town poet, the lady kleptomaniac, the best liar, the saintliest saint, the blackest sinner — all gradations of human virtue and vice. Story-telling, diary keeping, memoirs writing, annals composing, archives preserving — all were going full swing at Harbin.

Mr. Rind went to the best hotel where he took two rooms. Mme. Manuilova went to the same hotel, but took the cheapest room. Lida went to stay with the Platovs.

X

'Come here, everyone! Look! Only look! She is a *beauty!*' Thus Lida was introduced to the Platovs.

Glafira, the eldest daughter, met her at the station and they went on foot to the small wooden house in Mo-dia-gow, where the poorer Russians of Harbin were usually to be found.

With Vladimir in Shanghai, there were only five young Platovs at home. They all rushed forward to greet Lida, and Mme. Platova emerged from the kitchen, with a benign smile, in a halo of vapors and smells.

Looking at them one would hardly think they were *one* family, so different were they in appearance, character, and bearing. Glafira was full of life, and courage, and laughter. Galina was silent and timid. Mushka — eight years old — was a puffy and pale little girl, with eyes always astonished, always ready to feel offended and to weep a little. The boys looked different too: Grisha — golden-haired and freckled — a smiling optimist, busy and helpful; Kostik — with the curly disheveled head of a dreamer, always diligently and silently busy, having in him an obstinate urge to build, typical of an inventor. The trait they had in common was a peculiar intensity of life, though differently centered in each separate case.

Never afterward could Lida remember in detail how the house looked, for instantly she became busy, absorbed by the Platovs' life. Of course, the house was poor, but filled with the stream of young life and eagerness it seemed as cosy, cheerful, and even poetical, as a nest, for which appearances do not matter.

A 'corner' was prepared and waiting for Lida. A narrow bed, an icon at its head, a postcard showing mild spring flowers pinned on the wall, a chair — and the Platovs were proud to show Lida 'her place.'

The climax of the Platov day was when Father came home. Once a rich fur dealer, he now filled the humble position of manager of a store selling cheap furs. His work was hard, badly paid, and dangerous for his health. Furs brought from Mongolia were sometimes infected with anthrax, and that illness usually proved fatal. Thus the closing hour of an exhausting workday was always a blessed moment for Mr. Platov.

Stooped, clad in a shabby coat, smelling of hides and furs, he would trot home. And once across his own threshold, he became the important, adored, and admired head of a family.

His arrival was always waited for, and a ritual of welcome established.

His pet, Glafira, helped him to wash and change. A small closet was arranged for that purpose. As there was no running water in the house, she would bring him a big jar of pleasantly warm water, soap, a towel, a clean shirt, his robe. She would stand behind the curtain, on her guard, in case Father should need something else. Meanwhile she would tell him about the happenings in the house during his absence, for things always keep happening in big families.

Galina would noiselessly move chairs to the dining table, and the boys would bring dishes. Mushka, with Father's slippers, would approach the closet and push them under the curtain.

He would come out another man:

fresher, younger, but with an air of grave dignity, which he rarely had outside of his home.

The supper menu was always a secret, but there were never unsuccessful or untasty meals at the Platov table. Everything always succeeded in that kitchen. If there was no sugar or not enough butter, there was always Mme. Platova's gift of invention and make-believe. The other Platovs did the rest, for all of them were always hungry.

Mme. Platova would approach the table grandly, with a steaming pot in her hands, and say solemnly:—

'A soup. With potatoes *and* carrots.'

And the soup would eagerly steam forth its smell of potatoes *and* carrots. It would like to smell of meat, and cream, but it cannot. Still it was always enjoyed, for however different the Platovs were in appearance, they had one common trait—they possessed the gift of appreciation of what they had.

A soup!

Soup is one of the greatest human inventions. Hot, steaming, on wintry days it saves much of human health. It is a symbol of domesticity, honesty, stability, dignity, and integrity. Spoiled people never eat soup. They like fancy things. Rich people do not like soups, they have more refined things to eat. Lazy women never make soups, for it takes care and attention. Ambitious cooks would not waste time on a soup, for it is not ornamental. Good, honest mothers are always on the soup's side.

Consider its varieties as to the thickness, ingredients, modes of serving. One can put in meat, or fish, of course, or vegetables—one by one, or all together. One can put there bread, milk, butter. Even a chicken. Some say—even a turtle, but those are 'rumors.' But what you have in your house, of course, you can put into your soup, or else you can put there nothing—every time you will have a new, pleasant variety, to keep warm, to feel full, to be healthy.

There is only one substitute giving the

same warmth and energy—wine. Given the choice, one had better take soup. The Platov family did, and they never regretted it.

Pieces of sugar, slices of bread, portions of milk—all was counted in that house. Father and Mushka, the oldest and the youngest, had the *best* pieces, the two boys the *biggest*, the girls had the rest, but Mother was not hungry because, if one would believe her words, she had eaten while preparing food. Food was counted, that is, except soup. One could have two plates of it, or even three, for by adding some boiling water when preparing it, one could augment the soup's quantity indefinitely.

Father, sitting at the head of the table, would cross himself and start eating. Then all would follow his example, and that first course would be eaten slowly, in silence.

Surprises would begin usually at the second course, for which 'happenings' were served. And the third course was tea. Sometimes that second course would be a piece of meat, which 'happened,' or a piece of pie which 'happened' to be sent in by a lady living in the next house, or some fish when a friend would catch it in the Sungari River, but if nothing 'happened,' then tea would follow the soup immediately.

Tea was the most important, interesting event of the day. It meant relaxation. The first cup was given to the father. His teacup was an old one, brought from Russia. It was generous-bellied, and there was an inscription in big golden letters: 'Please, one more.' The last golden letter had disappeared from the surface no less than five years ago, but the Platovs not only could still read the inscription but also showed it to visitors: 'Look! Old orthography.' At the same time Mushka would bring him his books. They were two—Pushkin's poems and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Mr. Platov never condescended to read any other book.

The rest of the family kept busy with

small jobs — mending, writing, washing, knitting — but always attracted by the samovar, they would approach the table and pour one more cup of tea. The samovar was old, from Russia too, from the very place where the best samovars were made, from Tula. It could sing. Its voice was small and piercing, at times, and timid — at other times brazenly boastful. On what this depended, it would be hard to find out: was it the quality of the charcoal, or the occasional currents of air between the pieces of coal — who knows? That samovar had so many melodies that an average symphony orchestra would be smitten with envy. Listening to those sounds, the father could forecast the weather, the mother knew how her family felt, as if the samovar voiced their common mood.

If the samovar stopped singing, Galina would silently bring more charcoal. This was enough for inspiration. Real artists are easily started on a new burst of effort. If somebody's hands grew cold or numb, one had only to put them to the samovar's side. There was no end to the small services which the samovar obligingly discharged for Platov's family.

Occasionally somebody would start a 'celestial traveling.' Although there was no special ritual for its beginning, everyone recognized it the minute it started.

A typical 'celestial traveling' would begin like this.

Glafira, mending a sock, would suddenly halt and, looking at the hole, would say musingly: —

'How strange! The hole is just like South America.'

'South America?' Grisha would raise his head from his book. 'They have summer there right now.'

'Summer? It depends *where* . . . if nearer to the South Pole . . .' And Kostik would be busy with the map.

'Mamma! Why don't we *ever* go to South America?' Mushka would ask in a voice trembling with apprehension that she was not being given *all* the best in the world.

'How would we get visas?' All would speak now.

'That has been our mistake.' Mme. Platova would poke her head out of the kitchen. 'First we looked for the visas and then went where the visas said to go. We must *first choose the country*, the one which suits us well, and *then* try how grand we are at getting visas . . .' And she would disappear again.

'It all depends on luck,' Glafira would say gaily. 'We might go, and live there happily, having our *own*, big house and . . .'

'And a garden,' Galina's sigh would be heard.

'With trees? Mamma! With trees?' Mushka would cry.

'What else?' The father would put his book away. 'A garden *means* trees. Good fruit trees . . .'

'I will water them.' This from Grisha.

'In my room,' Galina would whisper almost inaudibly, 'I should like to have white curtains and a pot of geraniums under the window . . .'

'I will build an electric engine,' Kostik would say in a businesslike tone, 'water, light, electric fan, refrigerator, radio.'

'The radio must be in the farther part of the house' — Mme. Platova was again on the threshold. 'Remember, Father *needs rest* . . .'

'Well,' Father would say placidly, 'sometimes . . .'

'But Father will *not* work,' and Glafira's voice would sound almost indignant. 'No! He would take a drive in his carriage . . . and then rest . . .'

'Mamma, Mamma, what is the name of the horse? They never told *me* . . .' And tears would make Mushka's voice tremble.

'Valparaiso,' Kostik would say in a basso.

'But I want a kitten,' Mushka would cry.

'And I want a dog,' Grisha would answer.

'You may have them, you may have them.' Father would be all generosity.

'And also an ass . . .'

'Only not near *my* window . . .'

Mme. Platova would enter the room with a decisive step and say almost angrily:—

'Stop it! There is nothing better than a *cow* in the family . . . A *cow* we buy first . . .'

In this family Lida was to spend the six weeks of her visit to Harbin.

XI

Mr. Rind's first move was to go to the Soviet Consulate for a visa and permission to stay in one or two places while crossing the U.S.S.R.

'Can you speak Russian at all?' the Consul asked him in English.

'Almost not at all,' Mr. Rind confessed.

'What newspapers are you reading here in Harbin?'

Mr. Rind said that he had read none. Could the Consul recommend somebody with a fine knowledge of English, Russian, and Chinese to help him read the papers?

'Well,' the Consul said readily, 'I will be glad to help you. I can send you someone . . .'

Only then did Mr. Rind realize that he had invited a communist into his service, and that perhaps the Consul had his own reasons for being so ready to help; perhaps he wanted to know more about Mr. Rind while waiting for Moscow to approve granting him a visa.

But to refuse now would not be civil.

'And after all *what* am I afraid of?' Mr. Rind braced himself with this question. 'I am not connected with any political party.'

Still his anxiety grew and grew until it became out of any proportion to the fact. Even his dreams were disturbed that night. He saw a huge man with a mass of tangled hair on a heavy head, with long drooping mustaches and an unkempt black beard. They had a quarrel. The man clenched his fist and beat

the table. Full of indignation Mr. Rind woke up.

The first thing to do is to decline the Consul's offer, he decided.

At the same moment the door opened and the Chinese waiter entered with his morning tea. On the tray was also a letter in which the Consul wrote that the translator was due at the hotel at ten o'clock.

This left no way to a decent retreat and Mr. Rind decided mournfully to bear it.

At ten there was a knock at the door.

Here's the scoundrel now . . . Mr. Rind thought and he added aloud:—

'Come in.'

The door opened and a girl stepped in timidly. She was almost a child. Her round and pale face, bobbed hair, her gray eyes, clear and naïve, her white blouse and black skirt, her heavy shoes, made her look a child from an orphanage. A life of poverty and privation was stamped on every detail of her appearance and clothing.

Mr. Rind gasped.

'How do you do,' he said, and introduced himself.

In a melodious voice she said that she was — her official name — Comrade Dasha, that she knew Russian and English well, that she could speak fluently the local Chinese dialect and read newspapers, but that the books of Chinese classics were beyond her knowledge.

This latter could have been an excuse for sending her away, but Mr. Rind did not catch at it.

'Please sit down,' he said gently.

Mr. Rind opened the newspapers. He explained his requirements. Comrade Dasha first read the article quickly for herself and then described its contents to Mr. Rind. It was evident at once that she was a well-trained translator. She immediately grasped the essentials, explained the leading idea, and always used the most accurate words. Her mind was simple, clear, and logical, devoid of deviations.

When Mr. Rind expressed his pleasure and praise she looked at him with grateful eyes. She said she had received her education in a special school which prepared young people for future work in foreign countries. She had been trained in Chinese, and she had been looking forward to living and working in China.

'What kind of work?' Mr. Rind asked.

'Propaganda,' she said simply.

Here a noise rising from the street outside attracted their attention.

'What can that be?' Mr. Rind asked, as they went to the window.

'A Chinese procession,' Dasha said.

An immense crowd was moving slowly along the street. Chinamen clad in rags. Some of them were carrying banners, poles on which were fastened broad strips of cloth with the inscriptions in huge Chinese characters. From time to time, as though at a signal, they would stop, wave their banners, and shout fiercely in unison.

'This is a political demonstration,' Dasha said. 'They are in favor of Japan and the New Order.'

'Do the Chinese like it?'

'*Those people?*' And Dasha pointed her finger in the direction of the pavement. 'They are hired. They have no political knowledge at all. They cannot read their banners, and they do not care. You can hire them for anything. Such people are easy tools in any hands.'

They watched the procession silently.

'Let's go down where we can see closer,' Dasha said.

On the street, in her cheap and ugly coat and beret, Dasha looked even more like a child from a charity institution. Mr. Rind, tall and even elegant in his coat, made a queer-looking companion to Dasha.

'You wait here,' Dasha said. She plunged into the slowly moving crowd and disappeared. Presently she reappeared, exhausted, her beret in her hands.

'Gratitude to Japan, for release and

freedom. It is the municipal council who pays.'

'Pays what?' Mr. Rind asked.

'Money,' Dasha said simply. 'All those in the procession are hired at ten cents per man, to march from the bank of the river to the Green Market, that is across the town. They have to stop four times, before official buildings, and cry there the slogan for fifteen minutes each time. For every hundred Chinese there is one leader — a Japanese — who is responsible for seeing that photographs are taken at the right moment. It is also he who sees that the terms are kept.'

'But why is Japan doing it?'

'Building up a public opinion — in Japan and abroad. The photos will be sent everywhere to show how glad Chinese are to have the New Order in Asia.'

'Mr. Rind, do you like the arts?' Dasha once asked.

'The arts? What arts?'

'Arts in general. Poetry, music, dance . . .'

'I could stand some, I think,' Mr. Rind replied.

'Then let us go to the Workmen's Club. You will see our proletarian arts.'

'Are they something new?'

'They are different. We discard all which does not promote our ideals. We are for union in arts too, not for disintegration, therefore we do not encourage individualistic flights into nonsense.'

'Now, now . . . you speak like a textbook.'

'We think their worth is in keeping us warm and lighted on our way, while we are building a new life,' Dasha went on.

'You must not try your propaganda on me,' Mr. Rind laughed.

The next afternoon they went to the Club. It was a communistic club, although it did not bear that name openly. Dasha explained that owing to the disquiet in the town they would have an exclusively artistic program, speeches and discussions not being allowed. The police had to be present.

Mr. Rind and Dasha found seats in the sixth row. At once Mr. Rind began to look around discreetly. Groups of people speaking loudly, laughing gaily, slowly filled the other seats.

They were proletarians, there could be no doubt of that. The stooping shoulders, the heavy steps, the square knuckles — all labeled them working people, the descendants of generations of working classes.

There was a certain lack of self-restraint: voices too clamorous, gestures too broad, faces too outspoken. If they wanted to stare, they stared or coughed, or sneezed, without trying to hide the fact. The petty conveniences of social life were absent. All were poorly clad. The girls were not too pretty and the women were neither powdered nor well-groomed. They seemed faded, tarnished, as if their freshness were washed out in toil. Their hands were heavy, and their movements somehow clumsy.

Although communism was new, it nevertheless had already produced a standardized type, and with more or less prominence those new traits were found in each person there. It was a simplicity, almost a rudeness of clothing, of manners, of faces, of speech. But that rudeness was based on some quality, however coarse, of integrity, as if they had been hewn in haste out of the same stone, not long ago, as if they had not yet acquired the polish which comes from constant use, and moved with unstable pace, blindly pushing the fragile things out of their way.

Their relations among themselves seemed to be extremely friendly. A kind of spiritual unity, compactness, characterized that gathering. Instinctively Mr. Rind felt alien and on his guard.

Dasha said to him that a young and famous ballerina from Soviet Russia, a Sasha Vorobieva, would dance.

When the ballerina appeared on the stage she upset all Mr. Rind's ideas about dancers. She was a very young girl, thin, somehow squat, with a round

flat face. Her eyes were narrow, the cheekbones high and the mouth wide. She was almost ugly.

She wore black cotton shorts and a woolen pullover. On her bare feet a pair of ballet slippers. In her bobbed hair she had a cheap round comb, like Dasha's. She looked like another girl from the same orphanage.

Yet ballerina Sasha Vorobieva was met with tremendous applause. She smiled back simply and stood in a sturdy, unflattering posture, her hands in the pockets of her pullover.

Then she took off her pullover and threw it aside — and this sudden fleeting movement of her arms was strangely suggestive of the wings of a bird. But then again she was standing quietly in her white sleeveless blouse — again almost ugly.

The sounds of the piano rolled forth and a sudden change swept over the ballerina. She was tall now, tall and slender, all grace and fluent lines. At the first chords of music she rose on her toes, all tension, like a vibrant chord. In a continuous and fluent movement she left the earth and moved in air. She lifted her arms, high, then suddenly broke their lines into sharp angles at the elbows and put the palms of her hands flat to her cheeks. Her chin was high and the skin drew tight on her face. She was all moving angles in the outline. Her face grew pale and eyes remote, as if she were moving backward, further and further and faster and faster. Then in a sudden and powerful motion she was high in the air, she soared, defying the laws of matter, of weight, of gravitation. Her face, all drawn, was a tragic mask now, but her eyes were full of bright triumphant light. Her arms, her body and legs, in their constant fluent movements, created a series of unbroken lines, where past and future met, and the eye could not catch where she really was at any given moment. Then, in a final movement of her dance, she threw up her right hand, and it seemed that with her palm she flung

upward the eyes and hearts of the audience.

'It is "Inspiration,"' Dasha whispered.

After the tempest of applause ballerina Sasha Vorobieva stood again an ugly child, only now she seemed smaller.

Then followed singing, and Mr. Rind's heart softened. Then a man on the stage called 'Comrade Dasha.'

'It is for me,' Dasha said and hastily she thrust a piece of paper into Mr. Rind's hands. 'Translation,' she said and quickly walked down the aisle. The man on the stage gave her his hand and she clumsily jumped up to the stage. Dasha seemed to be universally known and liked, for people looked at her with friendly and encouraging smiles. Then she began to read a poem. She read with restrained fervor, with an exquisite sense of rhythm and measure. Enthusiasm and faith rang in her voice.

Mr. Rind listened and was sad. He pitied that faith, that pathos — and that child. For he sincerely saw no future for communism. What did that child know about it all? With her purity and adamant faith, with that childlike and simple approach to people, with those eyes of hers which could not lie, she seemed the incarnation of truth. And he thought that he must try to change the course of Dasha's life.

'I can and I should like to give you means to go to the United States,' he said on the way home. 'You would go through a college there, if only for a while to see life from another point of view. . . .'

'Capitalistic?'

'No. Democratic.'

She looked at him with her childish gaze and then said: —

'Do you think I am not happy as I am now? Do you want me to live on charity?'

'No,' said Mr. Rind, 'but you are very young, and very naïve. And you are giving your future, the whole of your life, to ideas which you have accepted

without criticism, which you even cannot criticize, having not seen better. You are not fair to yourself. Why not spend some years abroad? The rest of your life is at stake.'

'Mr. Rind,' she said, 'you are kind, but you do not understand. Why do you pity me? Because you have been accustomed to think that richness and comfort are equivalents for happiness and sense of life. The roughness of my existence hurts you, because you like me. But for the millions of other girls, you accept it without objection. In your system you give your girls silk stockings, instead of freedom . . . We — communist girls — are different. We accept poverty. We accept misery. We count on no personal rewards, nor even on personal happiness. Women now stand in the front ranks . . .'

'Dasha,' Mr. Rind addressed her sadly, 'all this means much suffering . . .'

She stopped. She looked at him with startled eyes.

'Do you think one can live without suffering?' A wondering pity was in her voice.

'Do you mean one could live without suffering?' she repeated. 'But look!' she cried. 'Only *look* around! What do you see?'

He stopped and looked around.

They were on the border of the Chinese part of Harbin, in Fu-dia-dian. The pavement was crowded with vehicles, rickshaws, and people who crossed the street wherever and whenever they chose. It was the peaceful commotion of overpopulation. Only the extraordinary dexterity of Chinese drivers and passers-by saved the moving mass from crumbling down and being trodden upon.

'Do those people not deserve a better life?' Dasha asked. 'Look at the poverty. Look how bravely they fight to earn something . . . Listen.'

Mr. Rind could not analyze all the sounds he heard. Life itself made sounds in China. The artisans and wandering salesmen, the blind musician, the for-

tunetellers — all had their instruments belonging by tradition to their profession, and those instruments gave forth the special sounds particular to them. The cobbler beat a small gong, the tinker made sounds with thin pincers, some had special rattleboxes — and almost all helped themselves with special throaty cries.

And the whole was impregnated with smells. The smell of food predominated. Hot food was sold in the open: fritters, pancakes, roasted chestnuts.

Everything was dusty and dirty: curbs, pavements, walls, windows, and more than half of the people, for poverty was but too visible. Beggars of all kinds and states of invalidity and deformity cried aloud their desolation. They cried in vain, for nobody paid any attention to them.

At the corner, Mr. Rind saw a terrible sight: a body — although still living, it could not be called a human being — a body half naked, half covered with rags of sackcloth, crawling on its fours. The exposed parts of the body revealed some terrible skin disease.

'Leprosy,' said Dasha shortly.

'What?' Mr. Rind gulped.

'Leprosy,' Dasha repeated.

'But is he allowed . . .' Mr. Rind began.

'Illnesses are free in China,' Dasha said.

He grasped her hand. 'Are you not afraid?'

'Afraid?' She looked at him closely. 'Of what?'

'What?' He was angry. 'Illness! Death!'

'Death?' She smiled a new and strange, exalted smile. She said 'death' with flight in her voice, as a poet would say 'glory,' or 'love,' or 'beauty,' or 'youth.' 'Why not death, Mr. Rind, if it helps our brothers?'

Mr. Rind's feeling for Comrade Dasha developed into an exquisite and affectionate friendship. It was mutual, too.

However great was the outward difference between the two, they had something in common. They both secretly yearned for a warmer life and for less loneliness.

Dasha was an orphan. She never had known her parents and had no idea who her parents were. She was bred in an orphanage. Nobody remembered who had placed her there. She was written down into the ledger as a 'female child N67.' From 'female child N67' she had been promoted to 'Octiabrina,' in honor of the October Revolution, but she could not pronounce her name very well and therefore, when she was five years old, she became finally established and recognized in this world as Dasha. Nobody ever came to claim Dasha. She was nobody's. She belonged to the state.

She went through her doleful childhood, always underfed, always pale, always afraid of something — from hand to hand — those cold and too brisk hands of hired nurses — from class to class — led by the overworked yet still fanatical teachers, from room to room shared with other orphans. Everybody was always tired. Children were treated as a collective burden, all given the same food, the same clothing, the same lessons, medicine, and tasks.

Then Dasha was accepted into a girl pioneers' group — and a whole world was opened before her. Here she met, for the first time, an interest toward her personally, sympathy, coöperation. She answered these with such a warmth, with such a devotion, that at once she became a centre of the group, an outstanding figure. This attracted to her the attention of the adult leaders and she was accepted into higher groups of communist youth organizations. Her credo was formed there instantly and forever: there were only two groups of people, wanton oppressors and innocent victims, and her duty became clear-cut — she had to fight against the first on behalf of the second. Now with joy, with faith and hope, she moved from the pioneers into

the Comsomol, and from there to the school of propaganda; then from Russia to Manchuria, studying the Chinese language, making friends and meeting different people following the same line. She was happy.

Still there remained in her heart the obscure longing of a child for a family. When she saw the simple and natural way in which love and devotion cement a family, she felt the bitter sadness of a beggar standing alone at the crossroad with outstretched hand.

Now they found each other — Mr. Rind and Dasha — and a mutual affection, steadily growing, tied them to each other.

Mr. Rind was both attracted and aghast by the appalling consistency of Dasha's nature. They spent hours in eager conversation. They spoke with the utmost sincerity. Communism was their constant topic. Mr. Rind attacked it, Dasha defended it. He assailed her with his education, logic, experience as weapons. She had only her fanaticism as a fortress.

'Mr. Rind,' Dasha said, 'I do not like the way you put it all: "your life," "your martyrdom." Why? It is much simpler. We are not heroes, or poets, or something. We are just plain workers. What we do — is our conception of our duty. This is simple human honesty. Life is not a play, nor a romantic novel, it is a forge.'

Little by little small details of conversation helped Mr. Rind to a fuller picture of Dasha. She was only twenty. Her life was one of daily privations. She knew nothing of luxury and comfort. For instance, she had never tasted chocolate. When Mr. Rind offered her a box of candy she refused, because she did not want 'to form the pernicious habits of luxury' — she said those words in her usual grave manner. She lived as an ascetic and behaved like a stoic. She never had a separate room for herself, never owned a trinket, never wore any but the cheapest dresses. Like all the

rest of her girl comrades, she bobbed her hair not because of the fashion, but because the shorter the hair the less it demands of soap and water — and those were their efforts to save the party's money. She wore a small round comb in her hair, because, in the long run, it would cost less than hairpins which could be easily lost, thus undermining the party funds. She lived on the strictest and most economical budget, she grudged every expense for herself, for she was living on party money, and it must be spent on the coming world revolution. Dasha never had silk stockings, face powder, handbags, straw hats, ribbons, laces, perfumes, brooches, rings, scarfs, and other things of that kind. And she never wanted them.

Mr. Rind pitied her, and she pitied Mr. Rind. In her opinion, America was a capitalistic country, politically and socially backward and, therefore, doomed and unhappy. When Mr. Rind said the American workers had the highest standard of living in the world, she accepted that and only said that higher salaries do not make people freer. Russians are paupers, but they have the joy and pride of building a free life for the future, for the coming era of universal happiness.

She pointed out to Mr. Rind how lonely he was in his own class where all is founded on competition, while in her class life meant coöperation. She would find a home and support and welcome everywhere on the globe where there is a communistic unit.

Dasha refused Mr. Rind's offers of candies, of fruit, of luncheons, of teas, of cinemas. She needed nothing. Only once she halted before a florist's window and, looking at a sheaf of roses, said: —

'I should like to know who, and to whom, and when one gives things like that . . . I wonder . . .' And she was lost in contemplation.

'Well, Dasha,' Mr. Rind said, 'suppose you tell me when your birthday is, and I will send you flowers like those.'

'No,' she cried eagerly, 'I would be

ashamed of that money spent on me. Now, when every third child on the globe is underfed . . . ?

Mr. Rind was not inclined to listen to Dasha pleading humanity's cause. He smiled.

'You prefer then to wait until every girl of the universe will have roses. Those are your ideals: every girl having the same roses at the same time. Would it not be tedious? Would it not make it stale?'

'Does it seem tedious to you to know that everybody has one's cup of tea in the morning, like you? It must make one's breakfast not stale, but more enjoyable.'

Lida and Dasha had seen each other occasionally in the lounge of the hotel, when Lida came in with Mme. Manuilova, and Dasha was leaving with Mr. Rind. Both girls knew each other.

One day they met face to face and instantly recognized each other. Belonging to Russia's two hostile parties, they could never look for a real meeting. But now they met, and one minute seemed a long time, while they studied each other.

Then Lida — first — moved forward the two steps which separated them and offered her hand.

'Let us be friends,' she said sincerely.

Dasha hesitated for an instant. A dark light of caution flickered in her eyes. Then she made a broad, spontaneous gesture and shook Lida's outstretched hand.

Between those two girls — personally — there was no grudge, no rivalry, nothing to forgive or forget. They both were poor, fatherless — because of the same revolution. They both were young and pure and kind. But the shadows of the previous generation's hatred made them mysterious to each other, as monsters, cruel, treacherous, base. Only their youth was so fresh in them that they still could be moved by the natural human desire to meet one another without reservation, openly.

XII

Mr. Rind had a visitor, Professor Kremenetz, a famous scientist. They had nothing to say to each other and sat at opposite ends of the room.

Why has he come? Mr. Rind thought as he looked at the short, massive, slovenly clad figure. The guest said nothing and did not even look at his host; the expression on his heavy face seemed frozen forever.

'*The Queen of Spades* by Tchaikovsky is the most popular opera among middle-class Russians,' Professor Kremenetz said unexpectedly, and then added: 'Will you kindly lend me a needle?'

'A needle?' Mr. Rind was at a loss. 'What kind of needle?'

'To sew. My sleeve is falling off.'

'Sorry, but I am afraid I haven't any,' and Mr. Rind tried to look polite.

'Then would you kindly allow me to ring the bell for a servant?'

'Why, of course . . .'

'Boy,' Mr. Kremenetz said to the servant when he came, 'a needle and a black thread to tack on this sleeve.' He said that in Chinese and the servant answered obligingly: —

'May I offer my humble efforts in sewing on your honorable sleeve?'

'Thank you, but I have plenty of time myself.'

Then Mr. Kremenetz, in his usual exquisitely polite manner, asked for and received Mr. Rind's permission to do mending in his presence, and taking off his coat he began to sew dextrously.

'Have you ever been in America?' Mr. Rind asked in an attempt at conversation.

'Yes, several times,' and Mr. Kremenetz took a button from his pocket.

'In New York?'

'Yes, three times,' and he diligently drew the needle through the button.

'How do you like New York?'

'Old-fashioned.'

'Wh-what?'

'Old-fashioned,' Mr. Kremenetz said

louder. 'I mean a town not following the latest tendencies in life and science . . . Backward.' He bit off the thread and making a knot started to sew on the lining of the sleeve.

'On what are you basing your opinion?' Mr. Rind asked in a cooler tone, trying not to show how much he felt offended by his visitor's casual remark.

'There are many reasons . . . Which side of the question interests you most?'

'You mentioned science?'

'Yes. Biologically, such big towns mean degeneration. Psychologically, they accentuate hatred and envy. Economically, they show deficits, if one takes into consideration prisons, asylums, and the like which are needed to keep towns going. From the hygienic point of view, they are a threat to health. . . .'

'Are there other motives?'

'Many. Such towns are harmful to talent, dangerous for honest civic and political workers.'

'Anything else?'

'Yes. They are—in many of their parts—ugly in appearance, vulgar linguistically, dangerous during wars . . . would you like some more motives?'

'No, thank you.'

'You are welcome.' Mr. Kremenetz bowed. He looked with pleasure at his coat, put it on, and said:—

'Now nobody could find a word against my looks, for I am going to the opera tonight.' And bowing again with deference to Mr. Rind, he asked:—

'May I have the honor to invite you for a dinner here, in this hotel, and to be my guest at the opera afterwards?'

'Oh, thank you,' Mr. Rind bowed in answer.

To Mr. Rind's astonishment Mr. Kremenetz's looks startled nobody. He was greeted with a kind of reverence by the customers of the restaurant and with homage by its servants, for this was China, where a scholar is always held in a high esteem, whatever might be his attire or his financial standing. For

Russians, too, a glorious scientific reputation has charm stronger than that of money or a high official standing.

The dinner turned out to be a most pleasant affair.

'Nature is lavish,' Mr. Kremenetz was saying. 'There is always overproduction and waste in her industry. She just amuses herself with the process of creation. So many find themselves outside of the play, on the margins of life. I was one of them: the seventh child of my parents. The third husband of my wife. The second stepfather to her son.' He paused.

Mr. Rind thought that this moment would be proper to offer one's sympathy, but Mr. Kremenetz proceeded:—

'This is a happy situation. I have lost my country, my social rank, my library, my manuscripts, my property.' He sighed happily. 'And with all that, my responsibilities. Now I live how I like. This is happiness.'

'But I understood you have had to live in lonely places, in India, far from civilized people . . . ' Mr. Rind tried his common sense on the professor.

'As to being civilized or not, people are basically the same,' Mr. Kremenetz answered.

'But the absence of comfort . . . '

'Comfort is tiresome, even stupid sometimes. It takes much time too.'

'But there are pleasures . . . ' Mr. Rind ventured.

'They are the same in the savage countries,' Mr. Kremenetz answered.

The conversation wandered aimlessly, at random. Mr. Rind enjoyed his host. He relaxed in the ease which seemed to be Mr. Kremenetz's aura.

Mr. Rind had never expected to find in Harbin an auditorium of such beautiful architectural proportions and inner ornaments. Built by Russians long ago, in times of prosperity, it stood as a relic of the past.

An atmosphere of excitement and joy pervaded the whole.

It was contagious. Mr. Rind felt his heart exhilarated by the sounds of tuned violins, even beating a little faster, impatient to see the curtain up, for a good audience is a part of enjoyment, bringing in that joyful animation which is a gift of those who love music.

He saw Lida with Mme. Manuilova. Lida almost danced into the auditorium, while her teacher entered solemnly and slowly.

Then heads turned around, for the Belle of the Town was making her picturesque entrance. She did not use the main door, but appeared in the frame of the small side door and stood there for a while looking before her with those big gray eyes — sad and wondering — the eyes of romance.

Tall, exquisitely built, with the small head of the immortal Psyche — all delicate, fragile, melancholic — she had the charm of absurdity, for she looked absurd as a living being, a modern young girl of the small and poor provincial town. She was clad in a pale-yellow taffeta dress, cut low at the bodice and very long and full in the skirt. She held in her hands a small muff made of tiny fresh roses and warmed there her long white fingers. The fact that she was supposed to feel chilly in the overheated room and sought warmth in that cool muff added to the absurdity of the vision.

But she appealed to an obscure longing for the romantic and she had the gift of creating illusions.

Of course all knew, but willingly forgot, that her dresses she sewed herself, the taffeta was begged on credit from a Chinese peddler, the roses were given by an unhappy florist madly in love with her, and her girl rivals had no doubts that the Belle's stockings were richly mended . . . But is it of any importance of what beauty is made?

There she stood, her exquisite head tilted a little toward her right shoulder — and she seemed to have no connection with the trivial details of life. Just because she looked like a Psyche, a Manon,

a Mignon — everything, except a common, living girl — she was the acknowledged belle of that fantastic town.

'Look at that audience,' Professor Kremenetz was saying in his freshly mended coat as he bowed to his friends. 'After the World War the economic situation of Europe was shaken, but here, at Harbin, it is unbelievably absurd. Only a few Russians earn regular salaries. The rest live on them. A system of a mutual cross-indebtedness has developed in this town. Besides being indebted to each other, they all — as a group and separately — are indebted to the Chinese — merchants, tailors, shoemakers, landlords . . . and still every year they have a good opera, concerts, symphony. If somebody fails entirely we hear about a suicide. And this usually is performed in style too. The victim goes once more to an opera, a ball, or to church — to have one's last drop of joy — and then die, leaving a letter behind. I have a collection of those letters . . . they make fascinating reading . . .'

Mr. Rind had nothing to say.

The opera with its compelling charm captivated Mr. Rind's attention at once. It gave the peculiar happiness known only through the arts: a sudden intensifying of one's own personality.

There was a moment of climax for Mr. Rind in the middle of the opera. The orchestra began the third entr'acte and Mr. Rind was taken by the penetrating sweet sadness of music peculiar to Tchaikovsky.

It was clear at once that those violins were playing about loneliness; about old age, and death. Yet there was nothing dreadful in it at all. It seemed to Mr. Rind that those human horrors, now brought to their height by violins, then thrown to their depth, and then again lifted and thrown forth in waves, had the beauty of grandeur in them. It was the throbbing poetry of human suffering, the pathos of the last acceptance of the inevitable: old age, loneliness, death. In their sombre beauty they seemed no less

beautiful, no less grand than the songs of youth and joy. It was like the sight of an autumn forest at sunset — that gold in gold, that fire in fire, that joy in sadness.

When the third act began, he saw an old woman on the stage — the Queen of Spades — an ominous old lady, but how utterly, unspeakably old, how irrevocably standing on the brink of her grave.

She was sitting by the fire. The portraits of her deceased people on the walls. Her old-fashioned room full of dead souvenirs. The faded flowers — immortelles — the stuffed birds — all was dead or dying in that luxurious room on the stage. The white cap and flowery ribbons looked grotesque on the old woman's head. And shaking from efforts and nodding that terrible head she began to sing in a screeching voice: —

*... Mon cœur qui bat, qui bat, qui bat,
Je ne sais pourquoi ...*

The Queen of Spades was remembering her youth.

'*Mme. de Pompadour!*' she sang, and Mme. Manuilova — in her chair — made a movement, as if a vista had opened straight into her past, moving backward: from Harbin, to St. Petersburg, to Paris.

'... *Why those tears?* ...' sang the lonely Liza against the bleak background of St. Petersburg at twilight, and the Platov family grew tense with compassion. The Platovs — all the seven of them — were sitting in the cheapest seats, in the last row. They were squandering the dollar given by the marine in Shanghai.

'... *Day and night ... I torture myself with the remembrance of you ...*' and Lida's face — acutely happy and unhappy at the same time — sparkled

with tears. *Three weeks! ... Three weeks without letters! But I could sing like that too ...* she consoled herself hastily and relaxed in enjoyment, lifted high, to the ceiling, with the sounds of Liza's soprano.

And Professor Kremenetz with the absorbed look of a philosopher on his face looked like Fate itself.

'How do you like the music?' he asked after the curtain fell.

Mr. Rind made his usual reply: 'I am not a connoisseur of it.' Then he added: 'I should say it is, perhaps, too emotional, too much passion in it. ...'

Mr. Kremenetz seemed astonished. 'But one likes operas exactly because of their absurd routine of passion. Passions are, perhaps, the most real and enjoyable parts of our life. ...'

At Mr. Rind's reluctant movement he said: —

'Take it from one who is consciously giving his life to a passion and never regrets it. Twenty years of passion, to which I sacrifice everything ...'

'You mean science,' Mr. Rind said. 'Sanskrit.'

'No. Gambling,' Professor Kremenetz answered.

Mr. Rind was startled.

'Do not be surprised,' said the professor. 'For you are a gambler too. Everybody is.'

'In this life of ours,' the professor continued dreamily, 'in our life so orderly and reasonable at the first glance, there is a preponderance of the irrational forces ... A dealing of cards — and one is born. Marriage — a lottery, career — a race, friendship — backing horses. War and politics — chess. Society — a poker game. A fatal throw of dice — and one is dead.'

(To be continued)

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